L. 3. 33.

A CALL TO THE UNCONVERTED TO TURN and LIVE, AND

Accept of Mercy while Mercy may be had, as ever they would find Mercy in the day of their extremity:

From the Living God.

By his unworthy Servant

RICHARD BAXTER.

To be Read in Families where any are Unconverted.

The Fifteenth Edition, with the addition of some Prayers.

LONDON,

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THE REASON OF THIS WORK.

IN that ſhort acquaintance I had with that Reverend, Learned Servant of Chriſt, Biſhop *Uſher*, he was oft from firſt to laſt importuning me to write a Directory for the ſeveral ranks of profeſſed Chriſtians, which might diſtinctly give each one their portion; beginning with the Unconverted, and then proceeding to the babes in Chriſt, and then to the ſtrong; and mixing ſome ſpecial Helps againſt the ſeveral ſins that they are addicted to. By the ſuddenneſs

neſs of his motion at our firſt congreſs, I perceived it was in his mind before: And I told him, both that it is abundantly done by many already: and that his unacquaintedneſs with my weakneſs, might make him think me fitter for it than I was. But this did not ſatisfie him, but ſtill he made it his requeſt, I confeſs I was not moved by his Reaſons, nor did I apprehend any great need of doing more than is done in that way: nor that I was likely to do more. And therefore I parted from him without the leaſt purpoſe to anſwer his deſire. But ſince his death, his words often came into my mind: and the great reverence I bore to him, did the more incline me to think with ſome complacency of his motion. And having of late intended to write a Family-Directory, I began to apprehend how congruouſly the fore-mentioned work ſhould lead the way; and the ſeveral Conditions of mens ſouls be ſpoken of, before we come to the ſeveral Relations. Hereupon I reſolved by Gods aſſiſtance to proceed in the order following. Firſt, To ſpeak to the impenitent Unconverted ſinners, who are not yet ſo much as purpoſing to Turn, or at leaſt are not ſetting about the Work. And with theſe I thought a wakening Perſwaſive was a more neceſſary

means

means than meer Directions. For Directions ſuppoſe men willing to obey them: but the perſons that we have firſt to deal with, are wilful and aſleep in ſin, and as men that are paſt feeling, having given themſelves over to ſin with greedineſs, *Epheſ.*4.19. My next Work muſt be for thoſe that have ſome purpoſes to Turn, and are about the Work, to Direct them for a through and true Converſion, that they miſcarry not in the birth. The third part muſt be Directions for the younger and weaker ſort of Chriſtians, that they may be ſtabliſhed, built up, and perſevere. The fourth part, Directions for lapſed and backſliding Chriſtians for their ſafe Recovery. Beſides theſe, there is intended ſome ſhort Perſwaſives and Directions againſt ſome ſpecial errors of the times, and againſt ſome common killing ſins. As for Directions to Doubting troubled Conſciences, that is done already. And the Strong I ſhall not write Directions for, becauſe they are ſo much taught of God already. And then the laſt part is intended more ſpecially for Families as ſuch, Directing the ſeveral Relations in their Duties. Some of theſe are already written: whether I ſhall have life and leiſure for the reſt, God only knoweth. And therefore I ſhall publiſh the ſe-

veral parts by themſelves, as I write them: and the rather becauſe they are intended for men of different ſtates, and becauſe I would not deterr them by the bulk or price, from reading what is written for their benefit. The uſe that this Part is publiſhed for, is, 1. For Maſters and Parents to read often in their Families, if they have Servants or Children that are yet Unconverted. 2. For all ſuch Unconverted perſons to read and conſider of themſelves. 3. For the richer ſort, that have any pitty on ſuch miſerable ſouls, to give to the unſanctified that need them: (if they have not fitter at hand to uſe and give.) The Lord awake us to work while it is day, for the ſaving of our own and others ſouls, in ſubſerviency to the bleſſed God, the Maker, the Redeemer, and the Sanctifier of ſouls.

Decemb. 10.
1657.

Richard Baxter.

To

To all unſanctified perſons that ſhall read this Book; Eſpecially of my Hearers in the Burrough and Pariſh of *Kederminſter.*

Men and Brethren,

THE *Eternal God that made you for a life Everlaſting, and hath Redeemed you by his only Son, when you had loſt it and your ſelves, being mindful of you in your ſin and miſery, hath indited the Goſpel, and ſealed it by his Spirit, and commanded his Miniſters to preach it to the World, that pardon being freely offered you, and Heaven being ſet before you, he might call you off from your fleſhly pleaſures, and from following after this deceitful World, and acquaint you with the*

Life that you were Created and Redeemed for, before you are dead and past remedy. He sendeth not you Prophets or Apostles, that receive their message by immediate Revelation, but yet he calleth you by his ordinary Ministers, who are Commissionated by him to preach the same Gospel, which Christ and his Apostles first delivered. The Lord standeth over you, and seeth how you forget him and your latter ends, and how light you make of Everlasting things, as men that understand not what they have to do or suffer: He seeth how bold you are in sin, and how fearless of his threatnings, and how careless of your souls, and how the works of Infidels are in your lives, while the belief of Christians is in your mouths. He seeth the dreadful Day at hand, when your sorrows will begin, and you must lament all this with fruitless cryes in torment and desperation, and then the remembrance of your folly will tear your hearts, if true Conversion now prevent it not. In compassion of your sinful miserable souls, the Lord that better knows your case than you can know it, hath made it our duty to speak to you in his Name, (2 Cor. 5. 19.) and to tell you plainly of your sin and misery, and what will be your end, and how sad a change you will shortly see, if yet you go on a little longer. Having bought you at so dear a rate as the

blood

blood of his Son Jesus Christ, and made you so free and general a promise of pardon, and grace, and everlasting glory, he commandeth us to tender all this to you, as the gift of God, and to intreat you to consider of the necessity and worth of what he offereth. He seeth and pittieth you, while you are drowned in worldly cares and pleasures, and eagerly following childish toyes, and wasting that short and precious time for a thing of nought, in which you should make ready for an everlasting life; and therefore he hath commanded us to call after you, and tell you how you lose your labour, and are about to lose your souls, and to tell you what greater and better things you might certainly have, if you would hearken to his Call, (Isa.55. 1,2,3.) *We believe and obey the Voice of God; and come to you daily on His message, who hath charged us to preach, and be instant with you in season and out of season, and to lift up your voice like a Trumpet, and shew you your Transgressions and your sins,* Isa.58.1. 2 Tim.4. 1,2. *But, wo and alas! to the grief of our souls, and your own undoing, you stop your ears, you stiffen your necks, you harden your hearts, and break our hearts, and send us back to God with groans, to tell him that we have done his message, but can do no good on you, nor scarcely get a sober hearing. O that*

our eyes were as a Fountain of tears, that we might lament our ignorant, careleſs people, that have Chriſt before them, and pardon, and life, and Heaven before them, and have not hearts to know and value them! that might have Chriſt, and grace, and glory, as well as others, if it were not for their wilful negligence and contempt! O that the Lord would fill our hearts with more compaſſion to theſe miſerable ſouls, that we might caſt our ſelves even at their feet, and follow them to their houſes, and ſpeak to them with our bitter tears: For long have we preached to many of them, as in vain: we ſtudy plainneſs to make them underſtand, and many of them will not underſtand us: We ſtudy ſerious piercing words, to make them feel, but they will not feel. If the Greateſt matters would work with them, we ſhould awake them: If the ſweeteſt things would work, we ſhould entice them and win their hearts; If the moſt dreadful things would work, we ſhould at leaſt affright them from their wickedneſs: If Truth and Certainty would take with them, we ſhould ſoon convince them; if the God that made them, and the Chriſt that bought them might be heard, the caſe would ſoon be altered with them; if Scripture might be heard, we ſhould ſoon prevail? if Reaſon, even the beſt and ſtrongeſt Reaſon might

might be heard, we ſhould not doubt but we ſhould ſpeedily convince them: if Experience *might be heard, even their* own *experience, and the experience of all the world, the matter would be mended: Yea, if the Conſcience within them might be heard, the caſe would be better with them than it is. But if nothing can be heard, what then ſhall we do for them? If the dreadful God of Heaven be ſlighted, who then ſhall be regarded? If the inеſtimable Love and blood of a Redeemer be made light of, what then ſhall be valued? If Heaven have no deſirable Glory with them, and everlaſting Joyes be nothing worth; if they can jeſt at Hell, and dance about the bottomleſs pit, and play with the conſuming fire, and that when God and man do warn them of it: what ſhall we do for ſuch ſouls as theſe?*

Once more in the Name of the God of Heaven, I ſhall do the Meſſage to you which he hath commanded us, and leave it in theſe ſtanding lines to convert you or condemn you: to change you, or riſe up in Judgement againſt you, *and to be a witneſs to your faces, that once you had a* ſerious Call *to* Turn. *Hear all you that are the drudges of the world, and the ſervants of fleſh and* Satan! *That ſpend your dayes in looking after proſperity on earth, and drown your conſciences in drinking, and gluttony, and*

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idleneſs, and fooliſh ſports, and know you ſin, and yet will ſin, as if you ſet God at defiance, and bid him do his worſt and ſpare not! Hearken all you that mind not God, and have no heart to holy things, and feel no ſavour in the Word or Worſhip of the Lord, or in the thoughts or mention of eternal life, that are careleſs of your immortal ſouls, and never beſtowed one hour in enquiring what caſe they are in, whether ſanctified or unſanctified, and whether you are ready to appear before the Lord! Hearken all you that by ſinning in the Light, have ſinned your ſelves into Atheiſm and Infidelity, and do not believe the Word of God. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear the Gracious and yet Dreadful Call of God! His eye is all this while upon you. Your ſins are regiſtred, and you ſhall ſurely hear of them all again: God keepeth the Book now: and he will write it all upon your Conſciences with his terrors: and then you alſo ſhall keep it your ſelves: O ſinners, that you knew but what you are doing! and who you are all this while offending! The Sun it ſelf is darkneſs before the glory of that Majeſty which you daily abuſe, and careleſly provoke. The ſinning Angels were not able to ſtand before him, but were caſt down to be tormented with Devils. And dare ſuch ſilly worms as you ſo fearleſly offend,

offend, and ſet your ſelves againſt *your Maker! O that you did but a little know what a caſe that wretched ſoul is in, that hath engaged the living God* againſt *him. The Word of his mouth that made thee can unmake thee; the frown of his face will cut thee off, and caſt thee out into utter darkneſs. How eager are the Devils to be doing with thee that have tempted thee, and do but wait for the word from God, to take and uſe thee as their own! and then in a moment thou wilt be in Hell. If God be againſt thee, all things are againſt thee: this world is but thy priſon for all that thou ſo loveſt it: thou art but reſerved in it to the day of wrath,* (Job 21. 30.) *The Judge is coming, thy ſoul is even going. Yet a little while, and thy Friend ſhall ſay of thee,* He is dead: *and thou ſhalt ſee the things that thou now doſt deſpiſe, and feel that which now thou wilt not believe. Death will bring ſuch an Argument as thou canſt not anſwer: An Argument that ſhall effectually confute thy Cavils againſt the Word and wayes of God, and all thy ſelf-conceited dotages. And then how ſoon will thy mind be changed? Then be an unbeliever if thou canſt, ſtand then to all thy former words which thou waſt wont to utter againſt the Scriptures, or againſt a holy and a heavenly life. Make good that cauſe then before the Lord,*

which

which thou waſt wont to plead againſt thy Teachers, and againſt the people that feared God. Then ſtand to thy old opinions, and contemptuous thoughts of the diligence of the Saints: Make ready now thy ſtrongeſt Reaſons, and ſtand up then before the Judge, and plead like a man, for thy fleſhly, thy worldly, and ungodly life. But know that thou muſt have one to plead with, that will not be outfaced by thee: nor ſo eaſily put off as we thy fellow Creatures. O poor deceived wretched ſoul! there is nothing but a ſlender vail of fleſh betwixt thee and that amazing ſight, which will quickly ſilence thee, and turn thy tune, and make thee of another mind! As ſoon as Death hath drawn this Curtain, thou ſhalt ſee that which will quickly leave thee ſpeechleſs. And how quickly will that day and hour come? When thou haſt had but a few more merry hours, and but a few more pleaſant draughts and morſels, and a little more of the honours and riches of the world, thy portion will be ſpent, and thy pleaſures ended, and all is then gone that thou ſetteſt thy heart upon: of all that thou ſoldſt thy Saviour *and* ſalvation *for, there is nothing left but the heavy reckoning. As a Thief, that ſits merrily drinking the money in an Ale houſe which he hath ſtoln, when men are riding in poſt-haſte to apprehend him,*

him, ſo it is with you. While you are drowned in cares or fleſhly pleaſures, and making merry with your own ſhame, Death is coming in poſt-haſte to ſeize upon you, and carry your ſouls to ſuch a place, and ſtate, as now you little know or think of. Suppoſe when you were bold and buſie in your ſin, that a meſſenger were but coming poſt from London *to apprehend you, and take away your lives; though you ſaw him not, yet if you* knew *that he was coming, it would marr your mirth, and you would be thinking of the haſte he makes, and hearkning when he knocked at your door: O that you could but ſee what haſte Death makes, though yet it have not overtaken you! No Poſt ſo ſwift! No Meſſenger more ſure! As ſure as the Sun will be with you in the morning, though it hath many thouſands, and hundred thouſand miles to go in the night: ſo ſure will death be quickly with you, and* then *where is your ſport and pleaſure.* Then *will you jeſt and brave it out?* Then *will you jear at them that warned you?* Then *is it better to be a believing Saint, or a ſenſual worldling?* And then whoſe ſhall all thoſe things be *that you have gathered?* (Luke 12.19,20,21.) *Do you not obſerve that dayes and weeks are quickly gone, and nights and mornings come apace, and ſpeedily ſucceed each other?* You

ſleep,

ſleep, but your Damnation ſlumbereth not; You *linger*, but your Judgement this long time lingreth not: 2 *Pet.*2. 3,4,5. *to which* you are reſerved for puniſhment (2 *Pet.* 2.8,9.) O that you were wiſe to underſtand this, and that you did conſider your latter end, *Deut.*32. 29. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear the Call of God *in this Day of his* Salvation.

O careleſs ſinners, that you did but know the Love that you unthankfully neglect, and the preciouſneſs of the blood of Chriſt which you deſpiſe! O that you did but know the riches of the Goſpel! Oh that you did but know, a little *know the Certainty and the Glory, and bleſſedneſs of that everlaſting Life, which now you will not ſet your hearts upon, nor be perſwaded firſt and diligently to ſeek.* (Heb.11. 6. & 12. 28. Matth.6. 13.) *Did you but know the endleſs Life with God which you now neglect, how quickly would you caſt away your ſin! how quickly would you change your mind and life, your courſe and company, and turn the ſtreams of your affections, and lay out your care another way? How reſolutely would you ſcorn to yield to ſuch temptations as now deceive you, and carry you away? How zealouſly would you beſtir your ſelves for that moſt bleſſed life? How earneſt would you be*

with

with God in prayer? How diligent in hearing, and learning, and enquiring? How ſerious in meditating on the Laws of God? (Pſal. 1. 2.) *How fearful of ſinning in thought, word, or deed? and how careful to pleaſe God, and grow in Holineſs? O what a changed people you would be! And why ſhould not the certain word of God be believed by you, and prevail with you, which openeth to you theſe glorious and eternal things?*

Yea, let me tell you, that even here on earth, you little know the difference between the life which you refuſe, and the life which you chooſe? The Sanctified are converſing with God, when you dare ſcarce think of him, and when you are converſing but with earth and fleſh. Their Converſation is in Heaven, when you are utter ſtrangers to it, and your belly is your God, and you are minding earthly things, Phil. 3. 18, 19, 20. *They are ſeeking after the face of God, when you ſeek for nothing higher than this world. They are buſily laying out for an endleſs life, where they ſhall be equal with the Angels,* (Luke 20. 36.) *when you take up with a ſhadow, and a tranſitory thing of nought. How low and baſe is your earthly, fleſhly, ſinful life; in compariſon of the noble, ſpiritual life of true believers! Many a time have I looked on ſuch men with grief and pitty, to ſee them*

them trudge about the world, and ſpend their lives, and care, and labour for nothing but a little food and rayment, or a little fading pelf, or fleſhly pleaſures, or aiery Honours, as if they had no higher things to mind. What difference is there between the lives of theſe men, and of the beaſts that periſh, that ſpend their time in working, and eating, and living, but that they may live? They taſte not of the inward heavenly Pleaſures which Believers taſte and live upon. I had rather have a little of their comfort, which the fore-thoughts of their heavenly Inheritance doth afford them, though I had all their Scorns and Sufferings with it, than to have all your pleaſures and treacherous Proſperity: I would not have one of your ſecret gripes and pangs of Conſcience, and dark and dreadful thoughts of Death and the Life to come, for all that ever the world hath done for you, or all that you can reaſonably hope that it ſhould do. If I were in your Unconverted Carnal ſtate, and knew but what I know, and believed but what I now believe, methinks my life would be a fore-taſte of Hell: How oft ſhould I be thinking of the terrors of the Lord, and of the diſmal Day that is haſting on! Sure, Death and Hell would be ſtill before me. I ſhould think of them by day, and dream of them by night; I ſhould lie down

in fear, and riſe in fear, and live in fear, leſt Death ſhould come before I were converted. I ſhould have ſmall felicity in any thing that I poſſeſſed; and little pleaſure in any Company, and little joy in any thing in the world, as long as I knew my ſelf to be under the Curſe and Wrath of God: I ſhould be ſtill afraid of hearing that Voice, Luke 12.20. [Thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee.] *And that fearful ſentence would be written upon my Conſcience,* Iſa.48. 22. and 57. 21. [There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.] *O poor ſinners! It is a joyfuller life than this that you might live, if you were but* willing, *but* truly willing to hearken to Chriſt, *and come home to God. You might then draw near to God with boldneſs, and call him your* Father, *and comfortably truſt him with your ſouls and bodies. If you look upon* Promiſes, *you may ſay,* They are all mine. *If upon the Curſe, you may ſay,* [From this I am delivered!] *When you read the* Law, *you may ſee what you are ſaved from; when you read the* Goſpel, *you may ſee him that Redeemed you, and ſee the courſe of his Love, and holy Life, and ſufferings, and trace him in his temptations, tears and blood, in the work of your* ſalvation. *You may ſee Death conquered, and Heaven opened, and your Re-*

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ſurrection and Glorification provided for, in the Reſurrection and Glorification of your Lord. If you look on the Saints, *you may ſay,* [They are my Brethren and Companions.] *If on the unſanctified, you may rejoyce to think that you are ſaved from that ſtate. If you look upon the Heavens, the Sun, and Moon and Stars innumerable, you may think and ſay,* [My Fathers face is infinitely more glorious; Its higher matters that he hath prepared for his Saints; Yonder is but the outward Court of Heaven. The bleſſedneſs that he hath promiſed me is ſo much higher, that fleſh and blood cannot behold it.] *If thou think of the grave, you may remember that the* Glorified Spirit, a Living Head, and a Loving Father *have all ſo near Relation to your Duſt, that it cannot be forgotten or neglected, but will more certainly revive, than the plants and flowers in the Spring, Becauſe that the ſoul is ſtill alive; that is the Root of the* Body; *and* Chriſt *is alive, that is the* Root *of both. Even death which is the King of fears, may be remembred and entertained with joy; as being the Day of your deliverance from the Remnants of ſin and ſorrow, and the Day which you believed, and hoped, and waited for, when you ſhall ſee the bleſſed things which you had heard of, and ſhall find by preſent*

present joyful experience, what it was to choose the better part, and to be a sincere believing Saint. What say you Sirs? Is not this a more delightful life to be assured of salvation, and ready to die, than to live as the ungodly, that have their hearts overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and so that Day comes upon them unawares? Luke 21. 34, 36. *Might you not live a comfortable life, if once you were made the Heirs of Heaven, and sure to be saved when you leave the world? O look about you then, and think what you do, and cast not away such hopes as these for very nothing. The flesh and world can give you no such Hopes or Comforts.*

And besides all the misery that you bring upon your selves, you are the troublers of others as long as you are Unconverted: You trouble Magistrates to rule you by their Laws. You trouble Ministers by resisting the Light and guidance which they offer you: Your sin and misery is the greatest grief and trouble to them in the world. You trouble the Common-wealth, and draw the Judgements of God upon us: Its you that most disturb the holy peace and order of the Churches, and hinder our Union and Reformation, and are the shame and trouble of the Churches where you intrude, and

of the places where you are. Ah Lord! How heavy and ſad a caſe is this, that even in England *where the Goſpel doth abound, above any other Nation in the world, where teaching is ſo plain and common, and all the helps we can deſire are at hand, when the ſword hath been hewing us, and Judgement hath run as a fire through the Land; when deliverances have relieved us, and ſo many admirable mercies have engaged us to God and to the Goſpel, and an holy life: that yet after all this, our Cities and Towns, and Countreys ſhall abound with multitudes of unſanctified men, and ſwarm with ſo much ſenſuality as every where to our grief we ſee! One would have thought that after all this Light, and all this experience, and all theſe Judgements and Mercies of God, the people of this Nation ſhould have joyned together as one man to turn to the Lord; and ſhould have come to their godly Teacher, and lamented all their former ſins, and deſired him to joyn with them in publick Humiliation, to confeſs them openly, and beg pardon of them from the Lord, and ſhould have craved his Inſtruction for the time to come, and be glad to be ruled by the Spirit within, and the Miniſters of Chriſt without, according to the Word of God. One would think that after ſuch reaſon and Scripture evidence as they*

hear,

hear, and after all these means and Mercies, there should not be an ungodly person left among us, nor a Wordling, nor a Drunkard, or a hater of Reformation, or an enemy to Holiness be found in all our Towns or Countreys. If we be not all agreed about some Ceremonies or Forms of Government, one would think that before this, we should have been all agreed to live a holy and heavenly life; in obedience to God, his Word and Ministers, and in Love and Peace with one another. But, alas, How far are our people from this course! most of them in most places do set their hearts on earthly things, and seek not first the Kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, *but look at Holiness as a needless thing; their Families are prayerless, or else a few heartless lifeless words must serve instead of hearty fervent daily prayers; their children are not taught the knowledge of Christ, and the Covenant of Grace, nor brought up in the Nurture of the Lord, though they falsly promised all this in their Baptism. They instruct not their servants in the matters of Salvation, but so their work be done, they care not. There are more oaths, and curses, and ribbald or railing speeches in their Families, than gracious words that tend to edification. How few are the Families that fear the Lord, and enquire at his Word*

and

and Miniſters how they ſhould live, and what they ſhould do, and are willing to be taught and ruled, and that heartily look after everlaſting Life! And thoſe few that God hath made ſo happy, are commonly the by-word of their Neighbours: when we ſee ſome live in drunkenneſs, and ſome in pride and worldlineſs, and moſt of them have little care of their ſalvation, *though the cauſe be groſs, and paſt all controverſie, yet will they hardly be convinced of their miſery, and more hardly recovered and reformed: But when we have done all that we are able to ſave them from their ſins, we leave the moſt of them as we find them. And if according to the Law of God, we caſt them out of the Communion of the Church, when they have obſtinately rejected all our admonitions, they rage at us as if we were their enemies, and their hearts are filled with malice* againſt *us, and they will ſooner ſet themſelves* againſt *the Lord and his Laws, and Church, and Miniſters, than* againſt *their deadly ſins. This is the doleful caſe of* England, *We have Magiſtrates that countenance the wayes of Godlineſs: and an happy opportunity for Unity and Reformation is before us, and faithful Miniſters long to ſee the right ordering of the Church, and of the Ordinances of God: but the power of ſin in our people doth*

doth frustrate almost all. No where can almost a faithful Minister set up the unquestionable Discipline of Christ, or put back the most scandalous impenitent sinners from the Communion of the Church, and participation of the Sacraments, but the most of the people rail at them, and revile them: as if these ignorant careless souls were wiser than their Teachers, or than God himself, and fitter to rule the Church than they. And thus in the day of our visitation when God calls upon us to Reform his Church, though Magistrates seem willing, and faithful Ministers are willing, yet are the multitude of the people still unwilling, and sin hath so blinded them and hardned their hearts, that even in these dayes of Light and Grace, they are the obstinate enemies of Light and Grace, and will not be brought by the Calls of God to see their folly, and know what is for their good. O that the people of England knew at least in this their day the things that belong unto their peace, before they are hid from their eyes! *Luke* 19. 42.

O foolish miserable souls! (Gal. 3. 1) *Who* hath bewitched your *minds into such madness, and your hearts into such deadness, that you should be such mortal enemies to your selves, and go on so obstinately towards dam-*

nation, that neither the Word of God, nor the perſwaſions of men can change your minds, or hold your hands, or ſtop you till you are paſt remedy! Well ſinners! this life will not laſt alwayes; this patience will not wait upon you ſtill. Do not think that you ſhall abuſe your Maker and Redeemer, and ſerve his enemies, and debaſe your ſouls, and trouble the world, and wrong the Church, and reproach the godly, and grieve your Teachers, and hinder Reformation, and all this upon free coſt. You know not yet what this muſt coſt you, but you muſt ſhortly know when the righteous God ſhall take you in hand, who will handle you in another manner than the ſharpeſt Magiſtrates, or the plaineſt dealing Paſtors did, unleſs you prevent the everlaſting torments by a ſound Converſion, and a ſpeedy obeying of the Call of God. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear, *while Mercy hath a voice to call!*

One deſperate Objection (which I have after touched, but with too much brevity) I find ſticks cloſe to the hearts of many ungodly men. They think that God doth not ſo much care what men think, or ſay, or do, as we perſwade them; and therefore they care ſo little themſelves. *For the convincing of ſuch Atheiſtical men as thoſe, I ſhall propound theſe following Queſtions.*

1. *Doſt*

1. *Doſt thou think* God careth whether thou be a man or not? *If not*, *Who made thee and preſerveth thee? If he do, then ſure he careth whether thou* behave thy ſelf as a man. *No man is ſo fooliſh as to make any Inſtrument, build an Houſe, or a Ship, and not care when he hath done, whether it be good for the uſe he made it for. Do not for ſhame then impute ſuch folly to the God of Wiſdom, as if he made ſo noble a creature as man, and endowed him with ſuch noble faculties, and all for nothing; and careth not what becometh of him when he hath done. Why ſhould God give thee a mind that can know him, and a heart that can love him, if he cared not whether thou know him, and love him or not? Do you not ſee that in the courſe of Nature every thing is fitted to its uſe? the* Beaſts *know not God, nor are capable of loving him, becauſe they were made for no ſuch uſe; but* thy Capacity *ſhews that thou waſt made for God, and for a life to come.*

2. *Doſt thou think that God is* every where preſent, and Infinite, and Al-ſufficient; *If not, thou doſt not believe that he is God; And it is unreaſonable to imagine that God hath made a world that is greater and more extenſive or comprehenſive than himſelf! for none can communicate more than he hath. But if*

thou art forced to confeſs that God is every where, and as ſufficient for every ſingle man, as if he had never another creature to regard, you muſt needs confeſs then that he is not careleſs of the hearts and wayes of the ſons of men: For they are things that are ſtill before his eyes. It is baſe and blaſphemous thoughts of God, as if he were limited, abſent, or inſufficient, that makes men think him ſo regardleſs of their hearts and wayes.

3. *Doſt thou think that God* careth what becomes of thy body? *Whether thou be ſick or well? Whether thou live or die? If not, then how cameſt thou by thy life, and health, and mercies? If they came from any other fountain, tell us from whence: Is it not to God that thou prayeſt for thy life, and health?* Dareſt *thou ſay to him*, I will not depend upon thee? I will not be beholding to thee for the life and mercies of another day? *If ſo, then thou art a blinded Atheiſt. But if thou think he cares for thy body, canſt thou think he cares not more for thy ſoul: If he muſt regard to furniſh thee with Mercies, he will ſure have a regard whether thou Love and Live to Him that gave them.*

4. *Doſt thou believe that* God is the Governor of the world, or not? *If not, then there can be no* rightful Government. *For as*

no Justice of Peace can have Power but from the Soveraign; so no Soveraign can have Power but from God, nor be a lawful Governour but under him. And then all the world would be turned into confusion. But if thou must needs confess that God is the Governour of the world, what an unwise, unrighteous Governour wouldst thou make him, if thou think that he regarded not the hearts, and wayes of those whom he doth govern? This still is but to deny him to be God.

5. *If God do not care so much what is in our hearts, or what we do,* Why then should he make a Law for our hearts, and words, and wayes? *Would he* command *us that which he doth not care for? Would he so strictly* forbid *us sin, if he were indifferent whether we sin or not? Would he* promise *eternal life to the holy and obedient, if he cared not whether we be holy and obedient or no? Would he* threaten *Hell to all that are ungodly, if he cared not whether we were godly or not? Dareſt thou say, that the Almighty Holy God is fain to rule the world by a Lye, and to deceive men into obedience? Yea, the very Law of Nature it self doth contain not only* Precepts *of our duty, but the hopes and fears of a life to come, without which the world could not be governed; And certainly they are no de-*

ceits, by which an infinite Wisdom, and Power, and goodness doth govern the world.

6. *If God did not much regard our hearts and lives, why doth* he make all the world to be our Servants? *Doth he give us Sun, and Moon and Stars, the Earth and all the Creatures to attend us, and serve us with their lives and vertues, and yet doth he not care for our hearts or service? This is as foolish as to say, that he hath made all the world in vain, and careth not for it now he hath made it.*

7. *If he cared not for the frame of our hearts and lives, he would not have sent his* Son to redeem us, *and to cleanse us from all iniquity, and sanctifie us a peculiar people to himself,* Titus 2.14. *Surely the price that was paid for sinners, and the wonderful design of God in our* Redemption, *doth shew that he makes not light of sin, and that he is wonderfully in love with holiness.*

8. *If God did not regard our hearts and lives, he would not have made it the* office of his Ministers to call us daily to Repentance and an holy life; *Nor commanded them to make such a stir with sinners to win them unto God: He would not have appointed all his Ordinances, publick and private also to this end. Doth God command all this ado for a thing that he regards not?* 9. *Nor*

9. *Nor would he* puniſh *the world with* Hell hereafter, *or ſo many* dreadful Judgements here, *as thouſands feel, if he cared not what they think or do. Methinks, men that are ſo often groaning under his Rod, ſhould feel that he looks after their hearts and ways.*

10. *And how can the* Holy Ghoſt be our Sanctifier, *if God be ſo indifferent whether we be clean or unclean? Dare you think that the Holy Ghoſt doth take upon him a needleſs work?*

11. *Methinks, you might perceive even in the* malice of the tempter, *that God is holy, and hateth iniquity: and his Word is true that telleth us of the eternal puniſhment of ſin. The Scripture tells us of the Angels fall, and that many of them are become Devils by their ſin, and are malicious enemies of mans ſalvation. And do you not eaſily perceive it to be true? How come they elſe to be ſuch importunate Tempters of men, which we feel alas, by too much experience? Or if this evidence be not palpable enough to convince the Infidel, how come they to make ſo many bargains with Conjurers and Witches, to draw them from God and Salvation, as they have done. How come they to appear in terrible ſhapes to ſo many as they have done, and ſtill upon deſigns that de-*

clare their own dejected baſe condition, and their enmity to God and man, and their eager deſire to engage men in a way of ſin? If any Infidel will not believe that really theſe have been Witches and Apparitions, *and conſequently that there are Devils who are miſerable and malicious ſpirits, who by ſin are caſt out of the favour of God, and would draw men into their miſerable caſe, let them come and reaſon the caſe with me, and I ſhall quickly tell them of ſo many ſure and undenyable inſtances, and give them ſo much proof of the truth of it, as ſhall leave them nothing to ſay againſt it, unleſs they will ſtill ſay* [We will not believe] *Yea ſo much, as that I will not be beholden to the vileſt Atheiſt or Infidel to believe it, if he will not quite renounce his Reaſon, but give it leave to ſee the Light.*

12. *Laſtly, If yet you think that God (the Soveraign Ruler of the world, that is every where preſent, and preſerveth all) doth care ſo little what men are, or what they do, whether they are holy or unholy, obedient or dis-obedient to his Laws: then methinks that you your ſelves, and all the reſt of your fellow-creatures ſhould little care. Two Queſtions therefore I muſt here propound to you.* 1. *Do not you care what men ſay of you, or do to you? Are you contented that men ſlander* you, *and abuſe*

you,

you, *or ſet your Houſes or Towns on fire, or deſtroy your Cattel or Wives and Children, and impriſon, wound or kill your ſelves? If you will make a great matter of what men ſay or do againſt you, can you be ſo mad (for it is no better) as to think that the Omnipotent, holy God ſhould little regard what's ſaid or done againſt himſelf, and againſt his ſervants, and that by ſuch ſilly worms as men, that are his Workmanſhip? Did not* ſelfiſhneſs *make you blind and partial, you would know that one ſin againſt God, deſerves more puniſhment than ten thouſand thouſand times as much againſt ſuch ſilly things as you. Do you make no matter of difference between a bad ſervant and a good? an obedient and a diſobedient child? a Son that would lay down his life for you, and a Son that longs for your death, that he may have your Land? between a faithful friend and a deadly enemy? If you do* not, *you are not men, but ſomething elſe in humane ſhape. If you* do, *then you are ſomewhat worſe than men, if yet you would have the Bleſſed God to make no great difference between thoſe that love him above all the world, and thoſe that regard him not; between the holy and unholy ſoul.*

And 2. *I would ask you, Whether you would have the Rulers of the world to take no care*

what men ſay or do, or would you not? If not, then you would have all the world turned looſe, and you would have every man that is poorer than you have leave to rob you: and every man that hateth you, have leave to beat you or to kill you, and every man that liketh your Houſe, or Lands, or Goods, or Cattle, to have leave to take them from you, and every man to defile your Wives or Daughters that have a mind to it? And ſo we ſhould ſee whether it is that infidelity leads men. But if you like not this, then you are moſt unreaſonable, if you would have Magiſtrates to be regardful of mens actions and not God: If Magiſtrates muſt hang men for wronging you, *and the Eternal Majeſty muſt not puniſh them for wronging* him, *and breaking his Laws, which is infinitely a greater matter. As if you would have a Conſtable puniſh men, and the King or Judge to have no regard of it. For Kings are under God, as Conſtables are under Kings, and a thouſand fold lower.*

The truth is, wicked men are fallen ſo far from God to themſelves, that they are as Gods to themſelves, in their own eſteem, and beſides themſelves they know no God: and therefore any wrong that is done againſt them, *or any good that is done for them, they would have regarded: but the wrong and diſobedience that*

is

is against God, *they would have nothing made of. And they have such narrow blasphemous thoughts of God, as if he were a finite Creature like themselves, that can be but in one place at once, that makes them so blaspheme his Providence, and think he minds not Good or Evil, and will not regard the godly, or punish the ungodly, but were like the Idols of the Heathen, that have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, and hands without an executive power. But when the Memorial Book of God is opened, which is written for them that fear the Lord, and think upon his Name, and when the Lord shall say of them,* these are mine, *as he is making up his Jewels, and spareth them as a man spareth his Son that serveth him, then shall (these Infidels) return (to their wits) and the righteous shall return from their fears and sufferings, and shall discern between the Righteous and the Wicked, between those that serve God, and those that served him not,* Mal. 3. 16, 17, 18.

Another Objection I find most common in the mouths of the ungodly, especially of late years: They say, [We can do nothing without God; We cannot have Grace, if God will not give it us; and if he will, we shall quickly Turn: If he have not predestinated us, and will not turn us, how can we Turn our

selves,

ſelves, or be ſaved: It is not in him that wills, nor in him that runs;] *And thus they think they are excuſed.*

I have anſwered this formerly, and in this Book; but let me now ſay this much. 1. *Though you cannot* cure *your ſelves, you can hurt and poyſon your ſelves. Its God that muſt* ſanctifie *your hearts; but who* corrupted *them? Will you wilfully take poiſon, becauſe you cannot cure your ſelves? Methinks, you ſhould the more forbear it. You ſhould the more take heed of ſinning, if you cannot mend what ſin doth mar.* 2. *Though you cannot be converted without the ſpecial Grace of God, yet you muſt know that God giveth his Grace in the uſe of his holy means which he hath appointed to that end; and common Grace may enable you to forbear your groſs ſinning (as to the outward act) and to uſe thoſe means. Can you truly ſay that you do as much as you are able to do? Are you not able to go by an Alehouſe-door, or to ſhut your mouths, and keep out the drink? or to forbear the company that hardneth you in ſin? Are you not able to go hear the Word, and think of what you heard when you come home? and to conſider with your ſelves of your own condition, and of everlaſting things? Are you not able to read good Books from day to day, at leaſt on the Lords day, and to con-*

verſe

verſe with thoſe that fear the Lord? You cannot ſay that you have done what you were able. 3. *And therefore you muſt know that you can* forfeit *the Grace and help of God by your wilful ſinning or negligence, though you cannot without Grace turn to God. If you will not do what you can, its juſt with God to deny you that Grace by which you might do more.* 4. *And for Gods Decrees, you muſt know that they ſeparate not the end and means, but tye them together. God never decreed to ſave any but the ſanctified, nor to damn any but the unſanctified. God doth as truly decree from Everlaſting whether your land this year ſhall be barren or fruitful, and juſt how long you ſhall live in the world, as he hath decreed whether you ſhall be ſaved or not. And yet you would think that man but a fool that would forbear plowing and ſowing, and ſay,* If God have Decreed that my ground ſhall bear corn, it will bear, whether I plough and ſow, or not. If God have decreed that I ſhall live, whether I eat or not; but if he have not, it is not eating that will keep me alive; *Do you know how to anſwer ſuch a man, or do you not? If you do, then you know how to anſwer your ſelves; for the caſe is alike: Gods Decree is as peremptory about your bodies as your ſouls. If you* do not, *then try firſt theſe concluſions*

cluſions upon your bodies, before you venture to try them on your ſouls: ſee firſt whether God will keep you alive without food or raiment, and whether he will give you corn without tillage and labour, and whether he will bring you to your journeys end without your travel or carriage: and if you ſpeed well in this, then try whether he will bring you to Heaven without your diligent uſe of means, and ſit down and ſay, We cannot ſanctifie our ſelves.

And for the point of Free-will *which you harp ſo long upon: Divines are not ſo much diſagreed about it, as you imagine.* Auguſtine *as well as* Pelagius, Calvin *as well as* Arminius, *the* Dominicans *as well as the* Jeſuits, *all do generally maintain that man hath Free-will; that the Orthodox ſay, That Free-will is corrupted and diſpoſed to evil.* Epiphanius *condemned* Origen *for ſaying, That man had loſt the Image of God, and makes it a point of Hereſie. And yet one may truly ſay,* That man hath loſt Gods Image; *and* another *may truly ſay* that he hath not loſt it. *For there is a twofold Image of God on man: the one is* Natural, *and that is, our* Reaſon *and* Free-will, *and this is not loſt. The other is* Qualitative *and* Ethical, *and this is our* Holineſs, *and this is loſt and by Grace reſtored: No man of brains denyeth that a man hath a*

will

will that's Naturally free; Its free from violence, and its a self-determining Principle. But it is not free from evil Dispositions. It is habitually averse to God and Holiness, and enclined to earthly fleshly things. It is enslaved by a sinful byas. This no man methinks that is a Christian, should deny; and of the Aged, I see not how an Infidel can deny it. Alas, we easily confess to you, that you have not the spiritual Moral Free-will, which is but your right inclination, and your habitual Willingness it self. If you had a Will that were freed from wicked Inclinations, I had no need to write such Books as this to perswade you to be willing in a case which your own salvation lyeth on. To the grief of our souls, we perceive after all our preaching and perswasions, that the ungodly have not this spiritual free-will. But this is nothing but your willingness it self, and inclination to be unwilling; and therefore the want of it is so far from excusing you, that the more you want it (that is, the more you are wilful in sin) the worse you are, and the sorer will be your punishment. And our preaching, and perswasion, and your hearing and considering, are the appointed means to get this Moral Power or Freedom, that is, to make you truly willing.

Well Sirs, I have but three Requests to you,

and

and I have done. First, That you will ſerioꝰ
read over this ſmall Treatiſe: (and if you ha
ſuch as need it in your Families, that you wou
read it over and over to them: and if thoſe th
fear God, would go now and then to their ig
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your ſpiritual eſtate, that you may have the benefit of their Advice and Miniſterial help. Or if you have not a faithful Paſtor at home, make uſe of ſome other in ſo great a need. Thirdly, When by Reading, Conſideration, Prayer, and Miniſterial Advice, you are once acquainted with your ſin and miſery, with your Duty and Remedy; delay not, but preſently forſake your ſinful company and courſes, and turn to God, and obey his Call. As you love your ſouls, take heed that you go not on againſt ſo loud a Call of God, and againſt your own Knowledge and Conſciences, leſt it go worſe with you in the day of Judgement, than with Sodom and Gomorrah. Enquire of God, as a man that is willing to know the truth, and not to be a wilful cheater of his ſoul. Search the holy Scriptures daily, and ſee whether theſe things be ſo or not: try impartially whether it be ſafer to truſt Heaven or Earth, and whether it be better follow God or man, the Spirit or the fleſh, and better live in holineſs or ſin: and whether an unſanctified eſtate be ſafe for you to abide in, one day longer: And when you have found out which is beſt, Reſolve accordingly, and make your choice without any more ado. If you will be true to your own ſouls, and do not love everlaſting torments, I beſeech you as from the Lord, that you will but take this reaſonable

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and I have done. First, That you will ſeriouſly read over this ſmall Treatiſe: (and if you have ſuch as need it in your Families, that you would read it over and over to them: and if thoſe that fear God, would go now and then to their ignorant Neighbours, and read this or ſome other Book to them of this Subject, they might be a meanſo of winning of ſouls.) If we cannot intreat ſo ſmall a Labour of men for their own ſalvation, as to read ſuch ſhort inſtructions as theſe, they ſet little by themſelves, and will moſt juſtly periſh. Secondly, When you have read over this Book, I would intreat you to go alone, and ponder a little what you have read and bethink you as in the ſight of God, whether it be not true, and do not nearly touch your ſouls, and whether it be not time for you to look about you. And alſo I intreat you, that you will upon your knees beſeech the Lord that he will open your eyes to underſtand the Truth and turn your hearts to the love of God, and beg of him all that ſaving Grace that you have ſo long neglected, and follow it on from day to day, till your hearts be changed. And withal that you will go to your Paſtors (that are ſet over you to take care of the health and ſafety of your ſouls, as Phyſitians do for the health of your bodies) and deſire them to direct you what courſe to take, and acquaint them with

your

your ſpiritual eſtate, that you may have the benefit of their Advice and Miniſterial help. Or if you have not a faithful Paſtor at home, make uſe of ſome other in ſo great a need. Thirdly, When by Reading, Conſideration, Prayer, and Miniſterial Advice, you are once acquainted with your ſin and miſery, with your Duty and Remedy; delay not, but preſently forſake your ſinful company and courſes, and turn to God, and obey his Call. As you love your ſouls, take heed that you go not on againſt ſo loud a Call of God, and againſt your own Knowledge and Conſciences, leſt it go worſe with you in the day of Judgement, than with Sodom and Gomorrah. Enquire of God, as a man that is willing to know the truth, and not to be a wilful cheater of his ſoul. Search the holy Scriptures daily, and ſee whether theſe things be ſo or not: try impartially whether it be ſafer to truſt Heaven or Earth, and whether it be better follow God or man, the Spirit or the fleſh, and better live in holineſs or ſin: and whether an unſanctified eſtate be ſafe for you to abide in, one day longer: And when you have found out which is beſt, Reſolve accordingly, and make your choice without any more ado. If you will be true to your own ſouls, and do not love everlaſting torments, I beſeech you as from the Lord, that you will but take this reaſonable

ſonable Advice. O what happy Towns a
Countreys, and what a happy Nation might
have, if we could but perſwade our Neighbo
to agree to ſuch a neceſſary motion! What j
ful men would all faithful Miniſters be, if t
could but ſee their people truly heavenly a
holy: This would be the Unity, the Peace,
Safety, the Glory of our Churches: the Hap
neſs of our Neighbours, and the comfort of
ſouls. Then how comfortably ſhould we pre
Abſolution and Peace to you, and deliver
Sacraments which are the Seals of Peace
you? And with what Love and Joy mi
we live among you? At your Death-bed h
boldly might we comfort and encourage y
departing ſouls? and at your Burial, h
comfortably might we leave you in the Gra
in expectation to meet your ſouls in Hea
and to ſee your bodies raiſed to that glory!

But if ſtill the moſt of you will go on i
careleſs, ignorant, fleſhly, worldly, or unholy l
and all our deſires and labours cannot ſo
prevail as to keep you from the wilful damn
of your ſelves, we muſt then imitate our L
who delighteth himſelf in th ſe few that
his Jewels, and in the little Flock that ſhall
ceive the Kingdom, when the moſt ſhall r
the miſery which they ſowed. In nature
cellent things are few: The world hath

m

many Suns or Moons, It is but a little of the earth that is gold or silver. Princes and Nobles are but a small part of the sons of men. And it is no great number that are Learned, Judicious, or Wise here in the world. And therefore if the gate being strait, and the way narrow, there be but few that find salvation, yet God will have his Glory and pleasure in those few. And when Christ shall come with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, his coming will be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all true Believers, 2 Thess. 1. 7,8,9,10.

And for the rest, as God the Father vouchsafed to create them, and God the Son disdained not to bear the penalty of their sins upon the Cross, and did not judge such sufferings vain, though he knew that by refusing the Sanctification of the Holy Ghost, they would finally destroy themselves; so we that are his Ministers, though these be not gathered, judge not our labour wholly lost (See Isa. 49. 5.)

Reader, I have done with thee, (when thou hast perused this Book) but sin hath not yet done with thee, (even those that thou thoughtest had been forgotten long ago) and Satan hath not yet done with thee (though now he be out of sight) and God hath not yet done with thee,

because

becauſe thou wilt not be perſwaded to hav
done with the deadly raigning ſin. I have writ
ten thee this Perſwaſive, as one that is going
into another world, where the things are ſeen
that here I ſpeak of: and as one that knoweth
thou muſt be ſhortly there thy ſelf. As ever
thou wilt meet me with comfort before the Lord
that made us; as ever thou wilt eſcape the
everlaſting plagues prepared for the final Neg
lecters of ſalvation, and for all that are not ſan
ctified by the Holy Ghoſt, *and love not the*
Communion of the Saints, *as members of the*
holy Catholick Church: *and as ever thou hope*
eſt to ſee the face of Chriſt the Judge, and o
the Majeſty of the Father, with Peace and Com
fort, and to be received into glory, when thou ar
turned naked out of this world, I beſeech thee
I charge thee to hear *and* obey *the* Call of God
and Reſolvedly to Turn, that thou maiſ
live. *But if thou* wilt not, *even when thou*
haſt no true reaſon for it, but becauſe thou wil
not; *I ſummon thee to anſwer it before the*
Lord, and require thee there to bear m
witneſs that I gave thee warning, and tha
thou waſt not condemned for want of a Cal
to Turn and Live, *but becauſe thou would*
not believe it, *and* obey it: *which alſo muſ*
be the Teſtimony of

Decemb. 11. 1657. Thy ſerious Monitor

RICHARD BAXTER

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CALL

TO THE

UNCONVERTED.

Ezek. 33. 11.

Say unto them, As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; Turn ye, turn ye from your evil wayes; for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael?

IT hath been the aſtoniſhing Wonder of many a Man as well as me, to read in the holy Scripture, how *few* will be ſaved: and that the greateſt part even of thoſe that are *called*, will be everlaſtingly caſt out of the Kingdom of Heaven, and be tormented with the Devils in eternal fire. Infidels

Infidels believe not this when they read it and therefore muſt feel it. Thoſe that do believe it, are forced to cry out with *Paul Rom.* 11. 33. *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! How unſearchable are his Judgements, and his ways paſt finding out!* But Nature it ſelf doth teach us all to lay the blame of evil work upon the doers, and therefore when we ſee any hainous thing done, a principle of Juſtice doth provoke us to enquire after him that did it, that the evil of the work may return the evil of ſhame upon the Author. If we ſaw a man killed, and cut in pieces by the way, we ſhould preſently ask, *Oh, who did this cruel deed?* If the Town were wilfully ſet on fire, you would ask, *What wicked wretch did this?* So when we read that the moſt will be firebrands of Hell for ever we muſt needs think with our ſelves; How comes this to paſs? and, who is it long of? Who is it that is ſo cruel as to be the cauſe of ſuch a thing as this? And we can meet with few that will own the guilt. It is indeed confeſt by *all* that *Satan* is the cauſe but that doth not reſolve the doubt, becauſe he is not the principal cauſe. He doth not *force* men to ſin, but tempt them to it, and leave it to their own wills, whether they

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will do it or not. He doth not *carry* men to an Ale-houſe, and force open their mouths, and pour in the drink; nor doth he hold them that they cannot go to Gods Service; nor doth he force their hearts from holy thoughts. It lieth therefore between God himſelf and the ſinner; one of them muſt needs be the principal cauſe of all this miſery, which ever it is: For there is no other to caſt it upon: And *God* diſclaimeth it: *He* will not take it upon him. And the *wicked* diſclaim it uſually, and they will not take it upon them. And this is the Controverſie that is here managing in my Text.

The Lord complaineth of the *People*; and the *people* think, it is long of *God*. The ſame Controverſie is handled, *cap.* 18. where *verſ.* 25. they plainly ſay, *That the way of the Lord is not equal*, And God ſaith, *It is their ways that are not equal.* So here they ſay, *Verſ.* 19. *If our Tranſgreſſions and our ſins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how ſhall we then live?* As if they ſhould ſay, If we muſt die, and be miſerable, how can we help it? As if it were not long of them, but God. But God in my Text doth clear himſelf of it, and telleth them how they may help it if they will, and perſwadeth them to uſe the means; and if they will

not be perſwaded, he lets them know th
it is long of themſelves; and if this wi
not ſatisfie them, he will not therefore fo
bear to puniſh them: It is *He* that will b
the Judge: and he will judge them accor
ing to their wayes, they are no Judges
him or of themſelves; as wanting authorit
and wiſdom, and impartiality: Nor is
their cavilling and quarrelling with Go
that ſhall ſerve their turn, or ſave them fro
the execution of Juſtice which they mu
mur at.

The words of this Verſe contain, 1. God
purgation or cleering of himſelf from th
blame of their Deſtruction. This he doth
not by diſowning his Law; that *the wicke
ſhall die*, nor by diſowning his Judgmen
and Execution according to that Law,
giving them any hope that the Law ſhall no
be executed; but by profeſſing that it
not their death that he takes pleaſure in, bu
their *returning* rather, that they may live
And this he confirmeth to them by h
Oath. 2. An expreſs Exhortation to the wick
ed to Return; wherein God doth not onl
command, but perſwade, and condeſcen
alſo to reaſon the caſe with them, Why wi
they die? The direct End of this Exho
tation is, That they may Turn and Liv

Th

The Secondary or reſerved ends, upon Suppoſition that this is not attained, are theſe two. Firſt to convince them by the means which he uſed, that it is not long of God if they be miſerable. Secondly, to convince them from their manifeſt wilfulneſs in rejecting all his commands and perſwaſions, that it is long of themſelves: and they die, even becauſe they *will* die.

The ſubſtance of the Text doth lie in theſe Obſervations following.

Doct. 1. *It is the unchangeable Law of God, that wicked men muſt Turn or Die.*

Doct. 2. *It is the promiſe of God, that the wicked ſhall live, if they will but Turn.*

Doct. 3. *God taketh pleaſure in mens Converſion and Salvation, but not in their Death or Damnation: he had rather they would Return and Live, than go on and Die.*

Doct. 4. *This is a moſt certain truth, which becauſe God would not have men to queſtion, he hath confirmed it to them ſolemnly by his Oath.*

Doct. 5. *The Lord doth redouble his commands and perſwaſions to the wicked to Turn.*

Doct. 6. *The Lord condeſcendeth to reaſon the Caſe with them, and asketh the wicked, Why they will die?*

Doct. 7. *If after all this the wicked will no turn, it is not long of God that they perish but of themselves: their own wilfulness is the cause of their damnation; they therefore die, because they will die.*

Having laid the Text open before your eyes in these plain Propositions. I shall next speak somewhat of each of them in order though very briefly.

Doct. 1. *IT is the unchangeable Law of God that wicked men must Turn or Die.*

If you will believe God, believe this. There is but one of these two wayes for every wicked man, either Conversion or Damnation, I know, the wicked will hardly be perswaded either of the Truth or Equity of this. No wonder if the Guilty quarrel with the Law. Few men are apt to believe that which they would not have to be true: and fewer would have that to be true, which they apprehend to be against them. But it is not quarrelling with the Law, or with the Judge, that will save the Malefactor. Believing and regarding the Law might have prevented his death: but denying and accusing it, will but hasten it. If it were not so, a hundre

hundred would bring their *reaſons againſt* the Law, for one that would bring his reaſon *to* the Law: And men would rather chooſe to give their reaſons why *they* ſhould not be puniſhed, than to hear the Commands and Reaſons of their Governours which require them to obey. The Law was not made for you to judge, but that you might be ruled and judged by it.

But if there be any ſo blinde as to venture to queſtion either the Truth or the Juſtice of this Law of God, I ſhall briefly give you that evidence of both, which methinks ſhould ſatisfie a reaſonable man.

And firſt, If you doubt whether this be the Word of God or not, beſides an hundred other Texts, You may ſatisfied by theſe few, Matth. 18. 3. *Verily I ſay unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* John 3. 3. *Verily, Verily, I ſay unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God.* 2 Cor. 5. 17. *If a Man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature: Old things are paſt away, behold all things are become new.* Col. 3. 9, 10. *Ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the Image of him that created him.*

Heb.12.14. *Without Holineſs none ſhall ſ*
God. Rom.8.8 9. *So then, they that are in t*
fleſh, cannot pleaſed God. Now if any ma
have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of hi
Gal.6.15. *For in Chriſt Jeſus neither Circum*
ciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſio
but a new Creature, 1 Pet.1.3. *According*
his abundant Grace he hath begotten us agai
to a lively Hope. Verſe 23. *Being born*
gain, not of corruptible ſeed, but of incorru
tible, by the Word of God which liveth a
abideth for ever. 1 Pet.2.1,2. *Wherefore la*
ing aſide all malice, and all guile, and hypocr
ſies, and envies, and evil ſpeakings; as ne
born Babes deſire the ſincere milk of the Wor
that ye may grow thereby: Pſal 9.17. *Th*
wicked ſhall be turned into Hell, and all t
Nations that fear God, Pſal.11.5. *And th*
Lord loveth the righteous, but the wicked h
Soul hateth.

As I need not to ſtay to open theſe Tex
which are ſo plain, ſo I think I need not ad
any more of that multitude which ſpeak th
like: If thou be a man that doeſt believ
the Word of GOD, here is already enoug
to ſatisfie thee, that the wicked muſt b
Converted or Condemned. You are alread
brought ſo far, that you muſt either confe
tha

that this is true, or ſay plainly, You will not believe the Word of God. And if once you be come to that paſs, there is but ſmall hopes of you: look to your ſelves as well as you can: for its like you will not be long out of Hell. You would be ready to fly in the face of thim that ſhould give *you* the lye: and yet dare you give the lye to God? But if you tell God plainly you will not believe him, blame him not if he never warn you more, or if he forſake you, and give you up as hopeleſs. For to what purpoſe ſhould he warn you, If you will not believe him? Should he ſend an Angel from Heaven to you, it ſeems you would not believe. For an Angel can ſpeak but the Word of God: and if an Angel ſhould bring you an other Goſpel, you are not to receive it, but to hold him accurſed, *Gal.* 1. 8. And ſurely there is no Angel to be believed before the Son of God, who came from the Father to bring us this Doctrine. If he be not to be believed, then all the Angels in Heaven are not to be believed. And if you ſtand on theſe terms with God, I ſhall leave you till he deal with you in a more convincing way. God hath a Voice that will make you hear. Though he *intreat* you to hear the Voice of his *Goſpel*, he will *make* you hear the Voice of his con-

demning Sentence, without intreaty. We cannot make you *believe* againſt your wills but God will make you *feel* againſt your wills.

But let us hear, what reaſon you have why you will not believe this Word of God which tells us that the wicked muſt be *Converted* or *Condemned?* I know your reaſon it is becauſe that you judge it unlikely that God ſhould be ſo unmerciful: you think it cruelty to damn Men everlaſtingly for ſo ſmall a thing as a ſinful life. And this leads us up to the ſecond thing, which is, to juſtifie the *Equity* of God in his Laws and Judgments.

And *firſt*, I think you will not deny but that it is moſt ſutable to an immortal Soul to be ruled by Laws that promiſe an immortal reward, and threaten an endleſs puniſhment. Otherwiſe the Law ſhould not be ſuted to the nature of the Subject: which will not be fully ruled by any lower means than the Hopes or Fears of everlaſting things. As it is in caſe of temporal puniſhment, if a Law were now made that the moſt hainous Crimes ſhall be puniſhed with an hundred years Captivitie, this might be of ſome Efficacy, as being equal to our lives. But if there had been no other penalties before the

Flood

Flood, when men lived eight or nine hundred years, it would not have been ſufficient, becauſe men would know that they might have ſo many hundred years impunity afterward. So it is in our preſent caſe.

2. I ſuppoſe you will confeſs that the *promiſe* of an endleſs and unconceivable glory is not unſutable to the Wiſdom of God, or the caſe of man. And why then ſhould you not think ſo of the *Threatning* of an endleſs and unſpeakable miſery!

3. When you find it in the Word of God that *ſo it is*, and *ſo it will be*, do you think your ſelves fit to contradict this Word? Will you call your Maker to the Bar? and examine his Word upon the accuſation of falſhood? Will you ſit upon him and judge him by the Law of your Conceits? Are you wiſer, and better, and righteouſer than he? Muſt the God of Heaven come to School to you to learn wiſdom? Muſt infinite wiſdom learn of folly? and infinite Goodneſs be corrected by a ſwiniſh ſinner, that cannot keep himſelf an hour clean? Muſt the Almighty ſtand at the Bar of a Worm? Oh horrid arrogancy of ſenſleſs duſt! Shall every mole, or clod, or dunghil accuſe the Sun of darkneſs, and undertake to illuminate the World? Where were you when the Almighty made

theſe Laws, that he did not call you to h
Counſel? Surely he made them before yo
were born, without deſiring your advice
and you come into the World too late for
reverſe them: if you could have done
great a work, you ſhould have ſtept out
your Nothingneſs, and have contradicte
Chriſt when he was on Earth, or *Moſes* b
fore him, or have ſaved *Adam* and his ſinf
Progeny from the threatned Death, that
there might have been no need of Chriſ
And what if God withdraw his patience an
ſuſtentation, and let you drop into He
while you are quarrelling with his Wor
will you *then* believe that there is an Hell

4. If ſin be ſuch an evil that it require
the *Death of Chriſt* for its expiation, no wo
der if it deſerve our everlaſting miſery.

5. And if the ſin of the *Devils* deſerv
an endleſs torment, why not alſo the ſin
man?

6. And methinks you ſhould perceiv
that it is not poſſible for the beſt of me
much leſs for the wicked to be compete
Judges of the deſert of ſin. Alas we are
both blind and partial. You can never kno
fully the deſert of ſin, till you fully know t
evil of ſin: and you can never fully know t
evil of ſin, till you fully know; 1. The Exc
ler

lency of the *ſoul* which it deformeth. 2. And the Excellency of *Holineſs* which it doth obliterate. 3. And the Reaſon and Excellency of the *Law* which it violateth. And 4. the Excellency of the *Glory* which it doth deſpiſe. And 5. the Excellency and Office of *Reaſon* which it treadeth down. 6. No nor till you know the infinite Excellency, Almightineſs, and Holineſs, of that *God* againſt whom it is committed. When you fully know all theſe, you ſhall fully know the deſert of ſin. Beſides, you know that the Offender is too partial to judge the Law, or the proceedings of his Judge. We judge by feeling, which blinds our reaſon. Wee ſee in common worldly things that moſt men think the Cauſe is right which is their own: and that all is wrong that's done againſt them: and let the moſt wiſe, or juſt, impartial friends perſwade them to the contrary, and its all in vain. There's few Children, but think the Father is unmerciful, or dealeth hardly with them, if he whip them. There's ſcarce the vileſt ſwiniſh wretch, but thinketh the Church doth wrong him if they excommunicate him; nor ſcarce a Thief or Murderer that is hanged, but would accuſe the Law and Judge of cruelty, if that would ſerve turn.

7. Con

7. Can you think that an *unholy* ſoul i *fit for Heaven?* Alaſs, they cannot *love* Go *here*, nor do him any ſervice which he ca accept. They are *contrary* to God, they *loa* that which he moſt loveth; and love tha which he abhorreth; They are uncapable o that imperfect Communion with him whic his Saints do here partake of. How the can they live in that perfect love of him and full delights, and Communion wit him, which is the bleſſedneſs of Heaven You do not accuſe your ſelves of unmerc fulneſs, if you make not your Enemy you boſome Counſellor; or if you take not you ſwine to bed and board with you: no no if you take away his life, though he nev ſinned; And yet will you blame the abſo lute Lord, the moſt wiſe and gracious So veraign of the World; if he condemn th Unconverted to perpetual miſery?

Uſe.

I Beſeech you now, all that love your Soul that, inſtead of quarrelling with God an with his Word, you will preſently ſtoop it, and uſe it for your good. All you th are yet unconverted in this Aſſembly, tak th

this as the undoubted Truth of God; You muſtere long be *Converted* or *Condemned*, There is no other way, but *Turn or Die*. When God that cannot lie hath told you this: When you hear it from the Maker and Judge of the world, its time for him that hath ears to hear. By this time you may ſee what you have to truſt to. You are but *dead and damned* men, except you will be converted. Should I tell you otherwiſe, I ſhould deceive you with a lie. Should I hide this from you; I ſhould undo you, and be guilty of your blood, as the Verſes before my Text aſſure me, *Verſe* 8. *When I ſay to the wicked, O wicked man, Thou ſhalt ſurely die; if thou doſt not ſpeak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man ſhall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand.* You ſee then though this be a rough unwelcome Doctrine, its ſuch as we muſt preach, and you muſt hear. It is eaſier to hear of Hell than feel it. If your neceſſities did not require it, we would not gall your tender Ears with Truths that ſeem ſo harſh and grievous. Hell would not be ſo full, if people were but willing to know their caſe, and to hear and think of it. The reaſon why ſo few eſcape it, is, becauſe they ſtrive not to enter in at the ſtrait gate of Converſion, and

to goe the narrow way of Holineſs whil
they have Time; and they ſtrive not, be
cauſe they be not awakened to a lively feel
ing of the danger they are in: and they b
not awakened, becauſe they are loth to hea
or think of it; and that is partly through
fooliſh tenderneſs, and carnal ſelf-love; an
partly, becauſe they do not well believe th
Word that threatneth it. If you will no
throughly believe this Truth, methinks th
weight of it ſhould force you to remembe
it; and it ſhould follow you, and give you
no reſt, till you are converted. If you ha
but once heard this word, by the voice o
an Angel. *Thou muſt be Converted or Con-
demned: Turn or Die:* Would it not ſtick i
your mind, and haunt you night and day,
ſo that in your ſinning you would remem-
ber it, and at your labour you would re-
member it; as if the voice were ſtill in you
ears, *Turn or Die!* O happy were your ſouls
if it might thus work with you, and neve
be forgotten, or let you alone, till it have
driven home your hearts to God. But i
you will caſt it out by forgetfulneſs or un-
belief, How can it work to your Converſion
and Salvation? But take this with you to
your ſorrow, though you may put this out
of your minds, you cannot put it out o
the

the Bible: but *there* it will ſtand as a ſealed truth which you ſhall experimentally know for ever, that there is no other way but *Turn* or *Die*.

O what is the matter then that the hearts of ſinners be not pierced with ſuch a weighty Truth! A man would think now, that every Unconverted Soul that hears theſe words, ſhould be pricked to the Heart, and think with themſelves, *This is my own Caſe*, and never be quiet till they found themſelves Converted. Believe it Sirs, this drowſie careleſs temper will not laſt long. Converſion and Condemnation are both of them awakening things: and one of them will make you feel ere long. I can foretel it as truly, as if I ſaw it with my Eyes, that either Grace or Hell will ſhortly bring theſe matters to the quick, and make you ſay, *What have I done? What a fooliſh wicked courſe have I taken?* The ſcornful and the ſtupid ſtate of ſinners will laſt but a little while. As ſoon as they either *Turn or Die*, the preſumptuous dream will be at an end; and then their wits and feeling will return.

But I foreſee there are two things that ar
like to harden the unconverted, and
make me loſe all my labour, except they ca
be taken out of the way: and that is, th
miſunderſtanding of thoſe two words, [*Th
wicked*] and [*Turn.*] Some will think with
themſelves; Its true, the *wicked* muſt *Tur
or Die:* but what is that to *me?* I am no
wicked, though I am a *ſinner*, as all men be
Others will think, *Its true that we muſt tur
from our evil wayes; but I am turned long ago
I hope this is not now to do.* And thus whil
wicked men think they are *not wicked*, bu
are already *Converted*, we loſe all our labou
in perſwading them to turn. I ſhall there
fore, before I go any further, tell you her
who are meant by [*the wicked*] and wh
they be that muſt *Turn* or *Die:* and alſo wha
is meant by *Turning*; and who they be tha
are truly converted: And this I have pur
poſely reſerved for this place, preferring th
Method that fits my end.

And here you may obſerve, that in th
ſenſe of the Text, a *wicked man*, and a *con
verted man* are contraries. No man is
wicked man that is converted, and no ma
is a converted man that is wicked; So tha
to be a wicked man, and to be an unconvert
e

ed man, is all one. And therefore in opening one we ſhall open both.

Before I can tell you what either *Wickedneſs* or *Converſion* is, I muſt go to the bottom, and fetch up the matter from the beginning.

It pleaſed the great Creator of the World, to make three ſorts of living Creatures; *Angels* he made pure Spirits without fleſh: and therefore he made them only for Heaven, and not for to dwell on Earth. *Brutes* were made fleſh without immortal ſouls: and therefore they were made only for Earth, and not for Heaven. *Man* is of a middle nature between both, as partaking of both Fleſh and Spirit: and therefore he was made both for Earth and Heaven. But as his Fleſh is made to be but a ſervant to his Spirit, ſo is he made for Earth but as his paſſage or way to Heaven, and not that this ſhould be his home or happineſs. The bleſſed ſtate that man was made for, was to behold the glorious Majeſty of the Lord, and to praiſe him among his holy Angels: and to love him, and be filled with his love for ever. And as this was the end that man was made for, ſo God did give him means that were fitted to the attaining of it. Theſe means were principally two. Firſt, the right Inclination and

Diſpo-

Diſpoſition of the mind of man. Second the right ordering of his life and practi For the firſt, God ſuited the diſpoſition man unto his End; giving him ſuch kno ledge of God as was fit for his preſent ſta and an Heart diſpoſed and inclined to G in holy Love. But yet he did not *fix* or *firm* him in this Condition; but, havi made him a free Agent, he left him in hands of his own free-will. For the ſeco God did that which belonged to him; t is, he gave man a perfect Law, requiring h to continue in the love of God, and perfe ly to obey him. By the wilful breach of Law, man did not only forfeit his hopes everlaſting Life, but alſo turned his he from God, and fixed it on theſe lower fle ly things, and hereby did blot out the ſp tual Image of God from his Soul. So t man did both fall ſhort of the Glory of G which was his End, and put himſelf out the Way by which he ſhould have attai it; and this both as to the frame of *heart* and of his *life*, The holy Inclinati and Love of his ſoul to God, he loſt: a inſtead of it, he contracted an Inclinati and love to the pleaſing of his fleſh, or car ſelf by earthly things: growing ſtrange God, and acquainted with the Creatu

A

And the courſe of his life was ſuited to the Bent and Inclination of his heart; he lived to his carnal ſelf, and not to God: he ſought the creature for the pleaſing of his fleſh, inſtead of ſeeking to pleaſe the Lord. With this *Nature or corrupt inclination* we are all now born into the world; For *who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean.* *Job* 14. 4. As a Lyon hath a fierce and cruel *Nature*, before he doth devour: and as an Adder hath a venemous *Nature*, before ſhe ſting; ſo in our very infancy we have thoſe ſinful *Natures* or *Inclinations* before we think, or ſpeak, or do amiſs. And hence ſpringeth all the ſinne of our lives. And not only ſo, but when GOD hath of his mercy provided us a Remedy, even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to be the Saviour of our ſouls, and bring us back to God again, we naturally love our preſent ſtate, and are loth to be brought out of it, and therefore are ſet againſt the means of our Recovery: and though cuſtom have taught us to thank Chriſt for his good will, yet carnal ſelf perſwadeth us to refuſe his Remedies, and to deſire to be excuſed when we are commanded to take the medicines which he offereth, and are called to forſake all, and follow him to God and Glory.

I pray

I pray you read over this leaf again, a
mark it; for, in these few words, you ha
a true Description of our natural state: a
consequently of a wicked man. For eve
man that is in this state of corrupted Natu
is a wicked man, and in a state of death.

By this also you are prepared to unde
stand what it is to be *Converted:* to whi
end you must further know, That the m
of God, not willing that man should per
in his sin, provided a Remedy, by causi
his Son to take our Nature, and being in o
Person God and Man, to become a Mediat
between God and Man, and by dying
our sins on the Cross, to ransom us from t
curse of God, and the power of the Dev
and having thus redeemed us, the Fath
hath delivered us into his hands as *his o*
Hereupon the Father and the Mediator
make a new Law and Covenant for Ma
not like the first, which gave life to none b
the perfectly obedient, and condemned m
for every sin: but Christ hath made a L
of Grace, or a Promise of Pardon, and Ev
lasting life to all that by true Repentan
and by Faith in Christ are Converted u
God. Like an Act of Oblivion which
made by a Prince to a company of Reb
on condition they will lay down Arms a

co

come in, and be loyal ſubjects for the time to come.

But becauſe the Lord knoweth that the heart of Man is grown ſo wicked, that for all this Men will not accept of the Remedy, if they be left to themſelves, therefore the Holy Ghoſt hath undertaken it as his Office to inſpire the Apoſtles, and Seal up the Scripture by Miracles and Wonders, and to illuminate and convert the Souls of the Elect.

So that by this much you ſee that as there are three Perſons in the Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, ſo each of theſe Perſons have their ſeveral works which are eminently aſcribed to them.

The *Fathers* works were, To Create us, to Rule us as his Rational creatures by the Law of Nature, and judge us thereby: And in mercy to provide us a Redeemer when we are loſt, and to ſend his Son, and accept his Ranſom.

The works of the *Son* for us were theſe, To Ranſom and Redeem us by his Sufferings, and Righteouſneſs, to give out the Promiſe or Law of Grace, and Rule and Judge the world as their Redeemer, on terms of Grace, and to make interceſſion for us, that the benefits of his Death may be communicated; and to ſend the Holy Ghoſt,

(which

(which the Father alſo doth by the Son) T
works of the holy Ghoſt for us are the
To endite the Holy Scriptures, by inſp
ing and guiding the Prophets and Apoſt
and ſealing the Word by his Miracul
gifts and works: and the illuminating a
exciting the ordinary Miniſters of the G
ſpel, and ſo enabling them, and help
them to publiſh that Word: and by
ſame Word Illuminating and Converting
Souls of men. So that as you could not h
been *reaſonable Creatures*, if the *Father*
not *Created* you: nor have had any *ac*
to God, if the *Son* had not *Redeemed* y
ſo neither can you have a *part in Chriſt*,
be ſaved, except the *Holy Ghoſt* do *ſanc*
you.

So that by this time you may ſee the ſe
ral cauſes of this work. The *Father* ſend
the *Son*: the *Son* Redeemeth us, and m
eth the promiſe of Grace: the *Goly G*
inditeth and ſealeth this Goſpel: the *Apoſ*
are the Secretaries of the Spirit to w
it: the *Preachers* of the Goſpel do p
claim it, and perſwade men to obey
And the *Holy Ghoſt* doth make their prea
ing effectual, by opening the hearts of m
to entertain it. And all this to repair
Image of God upon the ſoul; and to ſet
h

heart upon God again, and take it off the Creature and carnal ſelf, to which it is revolted; and ſo to turn the current of the life into an Heavenly Courſe, which before was earthly; and all this by the entertainment of Chriſt by Faith, who is the Phyſician of the ſoul.

By this which I have ſaid, you may ſee what it is to be *Wicked*, and what it is to be *Converted*. Which I think will be yet plainer to you, if I deſcribe them as conſiſting of their ſeveral parts: and for the firſt, a *wicked man* may be known by theſe three things.

First, He is one who placeth his *chief content on earth*, and loveth the Creature more than God, and his fleſhly proſperity above the heavenly felicity: He ſavoureth the things of the fleſh, but neither diſcerneth nor ſavoureth the things of the Spirit: though he will *ſay*, that Heaven is better than Earth, yet doth he not really ſo eſteem it to himſelf. If he might be ſure of Earth, he would let goe Heaven, and had rather ſtay here, than be removed thither. A life of perfect holineſs, in the ſight of God, and in his love and praiſes for ever in Heaven, doth not find ſuch liking with his heart, as a life of health, and wealth, and honour

here

here upon Earth. And though he falſly pr
feſs that he loveth God above all, yet inde
he never felt the power of Divine Lo
within him, but his mind is more ſet on t
World, or fleſhly pleaſures, than on Go
In a word, who ever loveth Earth abo
Heaven, and fleſhly proſperity more th
God, is a wicked unconverted man.

On the other ſide, *A Converted man*,
illuminated to diſcern the *Loveliness* of Go
and ſo far believeth the Glory that is to
had with God, that his heart is taken up
it, and ſet more upon it, than on any th
in this world. He had rather ſee the fac
God, and live in his everlaſting love a
praiſes, than have all the wealth or pleaſ
of the World. He ſeeth that all things
are vanity; and nothing but God can
the Soul: and therefore let the world
which way it will, he layeth up his treaſu
and hopes in Heaven, and for that he is
ſolved to let go all. As the fire doth mo
upward, and the Needle that is touc
with the Load-ſtone ſtill turneth to
North: ſo, the Converted ſoul is *encl*
unto God. Nothing elſe can ſatisfie hi
nor can he find any Content and Reſt
in his Love. In a word, All that are C
verted do Eſteem and Love God better t

all the World; and the heavenly felicity is dearer to them than their fleſhly proſperity. The proof of what I have ſaid, you may find in theſe places of Scripture, *Phil.* 3. 18.21. *Mat* 6. 19,20,21. *Col.*3. 1,2,2,4. *Rom.*8. 5,6,7,8,9,18,23. *Pſal.*73.25,26.

Secondly, A wicked man is one that maketh it the *principal buſineſs of his life to proſper in the World*, and attain his fleſhly ends. And though he may read and hear, and do much in the outward duties of Religion, and forbear diſgraceful ſins; yet this is all but upon the by, and he never makes it the trade and principal buſineſs of his life to pleaſe God, and attain everlaſting glory, and puts off God with the leavings of the World, and gives him no more ſervice than the fleſh can ſpare; for he will not part with all for Heaven.

On the contrary, A *converted* man is one that makes it the *principal care and buſineſs of his life to pleaſe God*, and to be ſaved, and takes all the bleſſings of this life but as accommodations in his journey towards another Life, and uſeth the Creature in ſubordination unto God; he loveth an holy life, and longeth to be *more* holy; he hath no ſin but what he hateth; and longeth, and prayeth, and ſtriveth to be rid of. The drift

and bent of his life is for God: and if he fi
it is contrary to the very bent of his hea
and life, and therefore he riſes again, and l
menteth it, and dare not wilfully live in a
known ſin. There is nothing in this Wor
ſo dear to him, but he can give it up to Go
and forſake it for him and the hopes of Gl
ry. All this you may ſee in *Col.*3. 1,2,3,4,
Mat. 6. 33,20. *Luke* 18. 22, 23, 29. *Lu*
14. 18, 24, 26, 27. *Rom.*8. 13. *Gal.*5. 2
Luke 12. 21, *&c.*

Thirdly, The Soul of a wicked man d
never truly diſcern and reliſh the myſtery
Redemption, nor thankfully entertain an
fered Saviour, nor is he taken up with t
love of the Redeemer, nor willing to be r
ed by him as Phyſitian of his Soul, that
may be ſaved from the guilt and power
his ſins, and recovered unto God; but
heart is inſenſible of this unſpeakable be
fit, and is quite againſt the healing means
which he ſhould be recovered. Though
may be willing to be *carnally* Religious,
he never reſigneth up his Soul to Chriſt, a
to the motions and conduct of his Wo
and Spirit.

On the contrary, the *Converted* ſoul ha
ing felt himſelf undone by ſin, and perci
ing that he hath loſt his peace with G

and hopes of Heaven, and is in danger of everlasting misery, doth thankfully entertain the tidings of Redemption, and believing in the Lord Jesus as his only Saviour, resigneth up himself to him for Wisdom, Righteousnes, Sanctification, and Redemption. He taketh Christ as the Life of his Soul, and liveth by him, and useth him as his salve for every sore, admiring the Wisdom and Love of God in this wonderful work of mans Redemption. In a word, Christ doth even dwell in his heart by Faith, and the Life that he now liveth is by the Faith of the Son of GOD, that hath loved him, and gave himself for him. Yea it is not so much he that liveth, as Christ in him. For these, see *Joh.* 1. 11,12. & 3. 19,20. *Rom.* 8. 9. *Phil.* 3. 7,8,9, 10. *Gal.* 2. 20. *John* 15. 2, 3, 4. 1 *Cor.* 1. 20. & 2. 2.

YOu see now in plain terms from the Word of God, who are the wicked, and who are the Converted. Ignorant people think that if a man be no swearer, nor curser, nor railer, nor drunkard, nor fornicator, not extortioner, nor wrong any body in their dealings, and if they come to Church, and say their prayers, these cannot be wicked

men. Or if a Man that hath been guilty o drunkenneſs, or ſwearing, or gaming, or th like Vices, do but forbear them for the tim to come, they think that this is a Con verted man. Others think, if a man tha hath been an Enemy and ſcorner at godli neſs, do but approve it, and joyn himſel with thoſe that are godly, and be hated fo it by the wicked as the godly are, that thi muſt needs be a Converted man. And ſom are ſo fooliſh as to think they are Convert ed, by taking up ſome new and falſe opin on, and falling into ſome dividing party as Anabaptiſts, Quakers, Papiſts, or ſuc like. And ſome think, if they have but bee affrighted by the fears of hell, and had Con victions and Gripes of Conſcience, an thereupon have purpoſed and promiſed a mendment, and taken up a life of Civil be haviour, and outward Religion, that th muſt needs be true Converſion. And the are the poor deluded ſouls that are like t loſe the benefit of all our perſwaſions: an when they hear that the wicked muſt *Tu* or *Die*, they think that this is not ſpoken t them; for they are not *wicked*, but are *Turn ed* already. And therefore it is that Chri told ſome of the Rulers of the Jews, wh were graver and civiller than the commo

peopl

people, that *Publicans and Harlots do go into the Kingdom of God before them*, Matth. 21. 31. Not that an Harlot or groſs ſinner can be ſaved without Converſion; but becauſe it was eaſier to make theſe groſs ſinners perceive their ſin and miſery, and the neceſſity of a change, when the civiller ſort do delude themſelves by thinking that they are converted already, when they be not.

O Sirs, Converſion is another kind of work than moſt are aware of: Its not a ſmall matter to bring an earthly mind to Heaven, and to ſhew man the amiable excellencies of God, till he be taken up in ſuch love to him, that never can be quenched; to break the heart for ſin, and make him flie for refuge unto Chriſt, and thankfully embrace him as the Life of his Soul; to have the very driſt and bent of the heart and life to be changed, ſo that a man renounceth that which he took for his felicity, and placeth his felicity where he never did before; and liveth not to the ſame end, and driveth not on the ſame deſign in the world, as formerly he did: In a word, he that is in Chriſt, is a *new creature: old things are paſt away, behold all things are become new*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. He hath a new underſtanding, a new will and reſolution, new ſorrows, and deſires, and love, and delight;

new thoughts, new ſpeeches, new company (if poſſible) and a new Converſation. Sin that before was a jeſting matter with him, is now ſo odious and terrible to him, that he flies from it as from Death. The World that was ſo lovely in his eyes, doth now appear but as vanity and vexation; God that was before neglected, is now the only happineſs of his ſoul; before he was forgotten, and every luſt preferred before him; but now he is ſet next the heart, and all things muſt give place to him: and the heart is taken up in the attendance and obſervance of him: and is grieved when he hides his face, and never thinks it ſelf well without him. Chriſt himſelf that was wont to be ſlightly thought of, is now his only hope and refuge, and he liveth upon him as on his daily bread; he cannot pray without him, nor rejoyce without him, nor think, nor ſpeak, nor live without him. Heaven it ſelf that before was look upon but as a tolerable reſerve, which he hoped might ſerve turn as better than *Hell* when he could not ſtay any longer in the World, is now taken for his home, the place of his only Hope and Reſt, where he ſhall See and Love, and praiſe that God that hath his heart already. *Hell* that before did ſeem but as a bugbear to frighten men from ſin, doth

now

now appear to be a real misery, that is not to be ventured on, nor jested with. The Works of holiness which before he was weary of, and seemed to be more ado than needs, are now both his recreation and his business, and the trade that he lives upon. The Bible which was before to him but almost as a common book, is now as the Law of *God*, as a Letter written to him from Heaven, and subscribed with the name of the *Eternal Majesty*; it is the Rule of his Thoughts, and Words, and Deeds: the Commands are binding, the Threats are dreadful, and the Promises of it speak life to his soul. The godly that seemed to him but like other men, are now the excellentest and happiest on earth. And the wicked that were his play-fellows, are now his grief: and he that could laugh at their sin, is readier now to weep for their sin and misery, *Psalm* 16. 3. and 15.4. *Phil.*3.18. In short, he hath a New End in his thoughts, and a New Way in his endeavours, and therefore his heart and life is new. Before, his *Carnal Self* was his *End*: and his pleasure, and worldly profits, and credit were his Way: and now God and everlasting glory is his *End*: and Christ, and the Spirit, and Word, and Ordinances, Holiness to God, and Righteousness and

Mercy to men, theſe are his *Way*. Before, *Self* was the chiefeſt Ruler, to which the matters of God and Conſcience muſt ſtoop and give place: and now God in Chriſt, by the Spirit, Word, and Miniſtry, is the chief Ruler, to whom both *Self*, and all the matters of *Self* muſt give place. So that this is not a change in one or two, or twenty points; but in the whole ſoul: and the very end and bent of the Converſation. A man may ſtep out of one path into another, and yet have his face the ſame way, and be ſtill going towards the ſame place: but 'tis another matter to turn quite back again, and take his Journey the clean contrary way to a contrary place. So it is here. A man may turn from drunkenneſs to thriftineſs, and forſake his good fellowſhip, and other groſs diſgraceful ſins, and ſet upon ſome duties of Religion, and yet be going ſtill to the ſame End as before, intending his carnal *Self* above all, and giving it ſtill the Government of his ſoul. But when he is Converted, this *Self* is denied and taken down, and God is ſet up, and his face is turned the contrary way; and he that before was addicted to himſelf, and lived to himſelf, is now by Sanctification devoted to God and liveth unto God: before he asked himſelf, what he ſhould do with his time, his parts

parts, and his eſtate, and for himſelf he uſed them: but now he asketh God what he ſhall do with them, and he uſeth them for him. Before he would pleaſe God ſo far as might ſtand with the pleaſure of his fleſh, and Carnal *Self*, but not to any great diſpleaſure of them. But now he will pleaſe God, let *Fleſh and Self* be never ſo much diſpleaſed. This is the great change that God will make upon all that ſhall be ſaved.

You can ſay, that the Holy Ghoſt is your *Sanctifier*; but do you know what *Sanctification is?* Why, this is it that I have now opened to you: and every Man and Woman in the World muſt have this, or be condemned to everlaſting miſery. They muſt *Turn* or *Die*.

Do you believe all this Sirs, or do you not? Surely you dare not ſay, you do not; For 'tis paſt doubt or denial; Theſe are not Controverſies, where one learned pious man is of one mind, and another of another; where one party ſaith this, and the other ſaith that: *Papiſts* and *Anabaptiſts*, and every Sect among us that deſerve to be called Chriſtians, are all agreed in this that I have ſaid; and if you will not believe the God of Truth, and that in a caſe where *every* Sect and party do believe him, you are utterly unexcuſable.

But if you do believe this, how comes it to paſs that you live ſo quietly in an unconverted ſtate? Do you know that you are Converted? and can you find this wonderful change upon your ſouls? Have you been thus born again and made anew? Be not theſe ſtrange matters to many of you? and ſuch as you never felt upon your ſelves? If you cannot tell the day or week of your change, or the very Sermon that Converted you, yet, Do you find that the work is done? and ſuch a chang indeed there is? and that you have ſuch hearts as are before deſcribed? Alas, the moſt do follow their worldly buſineſs, and little trouble their minds with ſuch thoughts. And if they be but reſtrained from ſcandalous ſins, and can ſay, *I am no whore-monger, nor thief, nor curſer, nor ſwearer, nor tipler, nor extortioner, I go to Church and ſay my Prayers*, they think that this is true Converſion, and they ſhall be ſaved as well as any. Alas, this is fooliſh cheating of your ſelves. This is too much contempt of an endleſs Glory: and too groſs neglect of your immortal ſouls. Can you make ſo light of Heaven and Hell? Your Corpſes will ſhortly all lie in the duſt, and Angels or Devils will preſently ſeize upon your Souls, and every man and woman of you all, will ſhortly be among other company,

and

and in an other caſe than now you are; you will dwell in thoſe houſes but a little longer; you will work in your ſhops and fields but a little longer; you will ſit in theſe ſeats, and dwell on this Earth but a little longer; you will ſee with thoſe eyes, and hear with thoſe ears, and ſpeak with thoſe tongues but a little longer, till the Reſurrection-day; and can you make ſhift to forget this? O what a place will you be ſhortly in of Joy or Torment! O what a ſight will you ſhortly ſee in Heaven or Hell! O what thoughts will ſhortly fill you hearts with unſpeakable Delight or Horror! What work will you be employed in? to praiſe the Lord with Saints and Angels, or to cry out in fire unquenchable with devils? And ſhould all this be forgotten? And all this will be endleſs and ſealed up by an unchangeable Decree: Eternity, Eternity will be the meaſure of your joyes or ſorrows, and can this be forgotten? and all this is true Sirs, moſt *certain true*: when you have gone up and down a little longer, and ſlept and awakt a few times more, you'l be dead and gone, and find all true that now I tell you: and yet can you now ſo much forget it! You ſhall then remember that you heard *this Sermon*, and that *this day*, from *this place*, you were remembred

membred of theſe things : and perceive them matters a thouſand times greater than either you or I could here conceive; and yet ſhall they be now ſo much forgotten?

Beloved friends, If the Lord had not awakened me to believe and lay to heart theſe things my ſelf, I ſhould have remained in the *dark* and *ſelfiſh* ſtate, and have periſhed for ever: but if he have truly made me ſenſible of them, it will conſtrain me to compaſſionate you, as well as my ſelf: If your eyes were ſo far opened as to ſee Hell, and you ſaw your neighbours, that were Unconverted, drag'd thither with hideous cries, though they were ſuch as you accounted honeſt people on earth, and feared no ſuch matter by themſelves; ſuch a ſight would make you go home and think of it, and think again, and make you warn all about you as that damned worldling in *Luke* 16.28. would have had his Brethren warned, leſt they come to that place of Torment. Why, Faith is a kind of ſight; it is the eye of the Soul, the Evidence of things not ſeen: If I believe God, it is next to ſeeing: And therefore I beſeech you excuſe me, if I be half as earneſt with you about theſe matters, as if I had ſeen them. If I muſt dye to morrow, and it were in my power to come again from another

ther world and tell you what I had ſeen, would you not be willing to hear me? and would you not believe, and regard what I ſhould tell you? If I might preach one Sermon to you after I am dead, and have ſeen what is done in the world to come, would you not have me plainly ſpeak the Truth, and would you not crowd to hear me? and would you not lay it to heart? But this muſt not be; God hath his appointed way of Teaching you by Scripture and Miniſters; and he will not humour Unbelievers ſo far as to ſend men from the dead to them, and to alter his eſtabliſht way; if any man quarrel with the Son, God will not humour him ſo farr as to ſet him up a clearer Light. Friends, I beſeech you regard me now, as you would do if I ſhould come from the dead to you; for I can give you as full aſſurance of the truth of what I ſay to you, as if I had been there and ſeen it with my eyes; For its poſſible for one from the dead to deceive you: but Jeſus Chriſt can never deceive you; the Word of God delivered in Scripture, and ſealed up by the Miracles and holy workings of the ſpirit, can never deceive you. Believe this, or believe nothing. Believe and obey this, or you are undone. Now as ever you believe the Word of God, and as ever

you

you care for the ſalvation of your ſouls, let me beg of you this reaſonable requeſt, and I beſeech you deny me not: that you would without any more delay, when you are gone from hence, remember what you heard, and enter into an earneſt ſearch of your hearts, and ſay to your ſelves, [*Is it ſo indeed? muſt I Turn or Die? Muſt I be Converted or Condemned? Its time for me then to look about me, before it be too late. O why did not I look after this till now? Why did I venturouſly poſt off, or ſlubber over ſo great a buſineſs? Was I awake, or in my wits! Oh bleſſed God, what a mercy is it that thou didſt not cut off my life all this while, before I had any certain hope of Eternal life? Well, God forbid that I ſhould neglect this work any longer. What ſtate is my ſoul in? Am I Converted, or am I not? Was ever ſuch a change or work done upon my ſoul? Have I been illuminated by the Word and Spirit of the Lord, to ſee the odiouſneſs of ſin, the need of a Saviour, the Love of Chriſt, and the Excellencies of God and Glory? Is my heart broken or humbled within me for my former life? Have I thankfully entertained my Saviour and Lord, that offered himſelf with pardon and life to my ſoul? Do I hate my former ſinful life, and the remnant of every ſin that is in me? Do I fly from them as my deadly*

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Enemies? Do I give up my ſelf to a life of Holineſs and Obedience to God? Do I love it and delight in it? Can I truly ſay that I am dead to the World and carnal ſelf, and that I live for God and the Glory which he hath promiſed? Hath Heaven more of my Eſtimation, and Reſolution, than Earth? and is God the Deareſt and Higheſt in my Soul? Once I am ſure, I lived principally to the world and fleſh, and God had nothing but ſome heartleſs ſervices which the world could ſpare, and which were the leavings of the fleſh. Is my heart now turned another way? Have I a new deſign, and a new end, and a new train of holy affections? Have I ſet my hopes and heart in Heaven? and is it now the ſcope, and deſign, and bent of my heart and life, to get well to Heaven, and ſee the glorious Face of God, and live in his everlaſting Love and Praiſe? And when I ſin, is it againſt the habitual bent and deſign of my heart? And do I conquer all groſs ſins, and am I weary, and willing to be rid of mine infirmities? This is the ſtate of a converted Soul. And thus muſt it be with me, or I muſt periſh. Is it thus indeed with me, or is it not? Its time to get this Doubt reſolved, before the dreadful Judge reſolve it. I am not ſuch a ſtranger to my own heart and life, but I may ſomewhat perceive whether I am thus Converted or not:

If

If I be not, it will do me no good to flatter my ſoul with falſe conceits and hopes. I am reſolved no more to deceive my ſelf; but to endeavour to know truly off or on, whether I be Converted, yea or no; that if I be, I may rejoyce in it, and glorifie my gracious Lord, and comfortably go on till I reach the Crown: and if I am not, I may ſet my ſelf to beg and ſeek after the Grace, that ſhould convert me, and may turn without any more delay; For, if I find in time that I am out of the way, by the help of Chriſt, I may turn and be recovered, but if I ſtay till either my heart be forſaken of God in blindneſs and hardneſs, or till I be catcht away by Death; its then too late. There is no place for Repentance and Converſion then; I know it muſt be now or never.]

Sirs, this is my requeſt to you, that you will but take your hearts to task, and thus examine them, till you ſee, if it may be, whether you are Converted or not? and if you cannot find it out by your own endeavours, go to your Miniſters, if they be faithful and experienced men, and deſire their aſſiſtance. The matter is great, let not baſhfulneſs nor careleſneſs hinder you. They are ſet over you to adviſe you, for the ſaving of your Souls, as Phyſitians adviſe you for the curing of your bodies. It undoes many thouſ-

ands

ands that they think they are in the way to ſalvation, when they are not: and think that they are Converted, when it is no ſuch thing. And then when we call to them daily to *Turn*, they go away as they came, and think that this concerns not them; for they are turned already, and hope they ſhall do well enough in the way that they are in, at leaſt if they do pick the faireſt path, and avoid ſome of the fouleſt ſteps, when alas, all this while they live but to the World, and fleſh, and are ſtrangers to God and Eternal life, and are quite out of the way to Heaven. And all this is much becauſe we cannot perſwade them to a few ſerious thoughts of their Condition, and ſpend a few hours in the examining of their ſtates. Is there not many a ſelf-deceiving Wretch that hear me this day, that never beſtowed one hour, or quarter of an hour in all their lives, to examine their ſouls, and try whether they are truly Converted or not? O merciful God, that will care for ſuch wretches that care no more for themſelves, and that will do ſo much to ſave them from Hell, and help them to Heaven, who will do ſo little for it themſelves! If all that are in the way to hell, and in a ſtate of damnation, did but know it, they durſt not continue in it. The greateſt hope that the devil hath

hath of bringing you to damnation without a Reſcue, is by keeping you blindfold, and ignorant of your ſtate, and making you believe that you may do well enough in the way that you are in. If you knew that you are out of the way to Heaven, and were loſt for ever if you ſhould die as you are; durſt you ſleep another night in the ſtate that you are in? durſt you live another day in it? Could you heartily laugh or be merry in ſuch a ſtate? What! And not know but you may be ſnatcht away to hell in an hour! Sure it would conſtrain you to forſake your former company and courſes, and to betake your ſelves to the ways of holineſs, and the Communion of the Saints. Sure it would drive you to cry to God for a new heart,& to ſeek help of thoſe that art fit to counſel you. There is none of you ſure *that cares not* for being damned. Well then I beſeech you preſently make enquiry into your hearts, and give them no reſt,till you find out your Condition,that if it be good,you may rejoyce in it,and go on: and if it be bad,you may preſently look about you for recovery, as men that believe they muſt *Turn or Die*. What ſay you, Sirs? Will you reſolve and promiſe to be at this much labour for your own Souls? Will you fall upon this ſelf-examination

when

when you come home? Is my requeſt unreaſonable? Your conſciences know, it is not. Reſolve on it then before you ſtir: Knowing how much it concerneth your Souls; I beſeech you for the ſake of that God that doth command you, at whoſe Bar you will ſhortly all appear, that you will not deny me this reaſonable Requeſt. For the ſake of thoſe Souls that muſt *Turn* or *Die*, I beſeech you deny me not; even but to make it your buſineſs to underſtand your own Conditions, and build upon ſure ground, and know off or on whether you are Converted or no, and venture not your Souls on negligent ſecurity.

But perhaps you'l ſay, What if we ſhould find our ſelves yet unconverted, what ſhall we do then? This queſtion leadeth me to my ſecond Doctrine; which will do much to the anſwering of it, to which I ſhall now proceed.

Doct. 2. *IT is the promiſe of GOD, that the wicked ſhall Live if they will but Turn; Unfeignedly and throughly Turn.*

The Lord here profeſſeth that this is it that he takes pleaſure in, that the wicked *Turn and Live*. Heaven is made as ſure to the Converted, as Hell is to the Unconverted.

Turn

Turn and Live, is as certain a Truth, as *Turn or Die*. God was not *bound* to provide us a Saviour, nor open to us a door of Hope, nor call us to Repent and Turn when once we had caſt our ſelves away by ſin. But he hath freely done it to magnifie his Mercy: Sinners, there are none of you ſhall have cauſe to go home, and ſay I preach Deſperation to you. Do *we* uſe to ſhut up the door of Mercy againſt you? O that you would not ſhut it up againſt your ſelves! Do we uſe to tell you that God will have no mercy on you, though you turn and be ſanctified? When did you ever hear a Preacher ſay ſuch a word? You that bark at the Preachers of the Goſpel, for deſiring to keep you out of Hell, and ſay, that they preach deſperation; tell me if you can, when you did ever hear any ſober man; that there is no hope for you, though you repent and be Converted? No, it is the clean contrary that we daily proclaim from the Lord; and who ever is born again, and by Faith and Repentance doth become a new Creature, ſhall certainly be ſaved, and ſo far are we from perſwading you to deſpair of this, that we perſwade you not to make any doubt of it. It is Life and not death, that is the firſt part of our meſſage to you: our Commiſſion is to offer Salvation; certain Salvation,

tion, a ſpeedy, glorious, everlaſting Salvation, to every one of you : to the pooreſt begger as well as the greateſt Lord : to the worſt of you ; even to drunkards, ſwearers, worldlings, thieves, yea to the deſpiſers and reproachers of the holy way of Salvation, We are commanded by the Lord our Maſter, to offer you apardon for all that's paſt, if you will but now at laſt return and live ; we are commanded to beſeech and intreat you to accept the offer and return; to tell you what preparation is made by Chriſt, what Mercy ſtayes for you ; what Patience waiteth on you ; what thoughts of kindneſs God hath towards you; and how happy, how certainly and unſpeakably happy you may be if you will. We have indeed alſo a meſſage of wrath and death : yea of a two-fold wrath and death : but neither of them is our principal Meſſage: we muſt tell you of the wrath that is on you already, and the death that you are born under, for the breach of the Law of works : but this is but to ſhew you the need of Mercy, and provoke you to eſteem the Grace of the Redeemer. And we tell you nothing but the Truth which you muſt know : for who will ſeek out for Phyſick, that knows not that he is ſick? our telling you of your miſery, is not it that makes

you

you miserable, but driveth you out to seek for Mercy. It is you that have brought this Death upon your selves. We tell you also of another death, even remediless, and much greater torment, that will fall on those that will not be Converted. But as this is true, and must be told you, so it is but the last and saddest part of our Message. We are first to offer you Mercy, if you will Turn: and it is only those that will not Turn, nor hear the voice of Mercy, that we must fore-tell Damnation to. Will you but cast away your Transgressions, delay no longer; but come away at the Call of Christ, and be Converted, and become new creatures, and we have not a word of damning wrath or death to speak against you. I do here in the Name of the Lord of Life proclaim to you all that hear me this day, to the worst of you, to the greatest, to the oldest sinner, that you may have mercy and salvation, if you will but Turn. There is mercy in God, there is sufficiency in the satisfaction of Christ, the Promise is free and full, and Universal: you may have Life, if you will but Turn. But then, as you love your Souls, Remember what Turning it is that Scripture speaks of. It is not to mend the old House, but to pull down all, and build a new, on Christ the Rock and sure

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Foundation. It is not to mend ſomewhat in a carnal courſe of life, but to mortifie the fleſh, and live after the Spirit. It is not to ſerve the fleſh and the world in a more reformed way without any ſcandalous diſgraceful ſins, and with a certain kind of Religiouſneſs, but it is to change your Maſter, and your works and End, and ſet your face the contrary way, and do all for the life that you never ſaw, and dedicate your ſelves and all you have to God. This is the change that muſt be made, if you will live.

Your ſelves are witneſſes now, that it is ſalvation and not damnation that is the great Doctrine I preach to you; and the firſt part of my meſſage to you. Accept of this, and we ſhall go no further with you; for we would not ſo much as affright or trouble you with the name of damnation, without neceſſity.

But of *you* will not be ſaved, there's no remedy, but Damnation muſt take place. For there is no middle place between the two: You muſt have either Life or Death.

And we are not only to *offer* you Life: but to ſhew you the grounds on which we do it, and call you to believe that God doth mean indeed as he ſpeaks: that the Promiſe is true, and extendeth Conditionally

to

to *you* as well as others, and that Heaven is no fancy; but a true felicity.

If you ask, where is our Commiſſion for this offer; among an hundred texts of Scripture, I will ſhew it you in theſe few.

Firſt you ſee it here in my Text, and the following Verſes, and in the 18. of *Ezek.* as plain as can be ſpoken. And in 2 *Cor.* 5. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. You have the very ſum of our Commiſſion, [*If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new Creature; old things are paſt away, behold all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt, and hath given to us the Miniſtry of Reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes to them, and hath committed unto us the word of Reconciliation: Now then we are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us we pray you in Chriſt ſtead, be ye reconciled unto God; for he hath made him to be ſin for us who knew no ſin, that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him.*] So *Mark* 16. 15, 16. [*Go ye into all the world and preach the Goſpel to every creature, He that believeth* (that is, with ſuch a Converting faith as is expreſſed) [*and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved, and he that believeth not ſhall be damned.*] And *Luke* 24. 46, 47

[*Thus*

[*Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that Repentance* (which is Conversion) *and Remission of sins, should be preached in his name among all Nations.*] And *Acts* 5.30,31. *The God of our Fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a Tree, him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance to* Israel, *and forgiveness of sins.* [And *Acts* 13.38,39. *Be it known unto you therefore men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe, are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of* Moses.] And lest you think this offer is restrained to the Jews, see *Gal.* 6. 15. [*For in Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature*] And *Luke* 14. 17. [*Come, for all things are now ready;*] and *ver.* 23, 24.

You see by this time that we are commanded to offer Life to *you all*, and to tell you from God, that if you will *Turn*, you may *Live*.

Here you may safely trust your Souls: for the Love of God is the Fountain of this offer, *John* 3.16. and the blood of the Son of God hath purchased it: the faithfulness and truth

of God is engaged to make the promiſe good: Miracles have ſealed up the truth of it: Preachers are ſent through the World to Proclaim it; the Sacraments are inſtituted and uſed for the ſolemn Delivery of the mercy offered; to them that will accept it: and the Spirit doth open the heart to entertain it, and is it ſelf the Earneſt of the full poſſeſſion. So that the truth of it is paſt controverſie, that the worſt of you all, and every one of you, if you will but be *Converted*, may be *Saved*.

Indeed if you will needs believe that you ſhall be ſaved *without* converſion, then you believe a falſhood: and if I ſhould preach that to you, I ſhould preach a lie: this were not to believe God, but the *Devil* and your own deceitful hearts. God hath his promiſe of Life, and the Devil hath *his* promiſe of Life: Gods promiſe is, [*Return and Live*] The Devils promiſe is [*You ſhall live whether you turn or not.*] The word of God is as I have ſhewed you [*Except ye be converted and become as little Children, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. 18.3. *Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, John 3.3,5. *Without holineſs none ſhall ſee God*, Heb. 12. 14.] The Devils Word is [*You may be ſaved without being born again*

again and Converted, you may do well enough without being holy; God doth but frighten you, he is more merciful than to do as he ſaith; he will be better to you than his word.] And alaſs, the greateſt part of the World believe this word of the Devil, before the Word of God; juſt as our firſt ſin and miſery came into the World. God ſaid to our firſt Parents, [*If ye eat ye ſhall die.*] And the Devil contradicteth him, and ſaith, [*Ye ſhall not die*] and the woman believed the Devil before God. So now the Lord ſaith, [*Turn or Die;*] And the Devil ſaith, [*You ſhall not Die, if you do but cry God mercy at laſt, and give over the acts of ſin when you can practiſe it no longer.*] And this is the word that the world believes. O hainous wickedneſs, to believe the Devil before God!

And yet that is not the worſt: but blaſphemouſly they call this *a Believing and Truſting God*, when they put him in the ſhape of Satan, who was a lyer from the beginning; and when they believe that the Word of God is a lie, they call this a *Truſting God*, and ſay they believe in him, and Truſt on him for ſalvation: Where did ever *God* ſay, that the unregenerate, unconverted, unſanctified ſhall be ſaved? Shew ſuch a

in Scripture. I challenge you, if you can. Why this is the *Devils* word, and to believe it is to believe the *Devil*, and the ſin that is commonly called *Preſumption*: and do you call this a *believing and truſting God?* There is enough in the Word of God to comfort and ſtrengthen the hearts of the ſanctified; but not a word to ſtrengthen the hands of wickedneſs, nor to give men the leaſt hope of being ſaved, though they be never ſanctified.

But if you will *Turn* and come into the way of Mercy, the Mercy of the Lord is ready to entertain you. Then Truſt God for Salvation boldly and confidently, for he is engaged by his Word to ſave you. He will be a Father to none but his Children, and he will ſave none but thoſe that forſake the World, the Devil, and the Fleſh, and come into his Family to be members of his Son, and have Communion with his Saints. But if they will not come in, it is long of themſelves: His doors are open: He keeps none back: He never ſent ſuch a meſſage as this to any of you: [*It is now too late: I will not receive thee, though thou be Converted.*] He *might* have done ſo, and done you no wrong: but he *did* not: he *doth* not to this day: He is ſtill ready to receive you, if you were but

ready

ready unfeignedly, and with all your hearts to *Turn*. And the fulneſs of this Truth will yet more *appear* in the two following Doctrines, which I ſhall therefore next proceed to, before I make any further Application of this.

Doct. 3. GOD *taketh Pleaſure in Mens Converſion and Salvation, but not in their Death or Damnation: he had rather they would Return and Live, than go on and die.*

I ſhall firſt teach you how to underſtand this, and then clear up the truth of it to you.

And for the firſt, you muſt obſerve theſe following things, 1. A *ſimple willingneſs or complacency* is the firſt Act of the *will*, following the *ſimple apprehenſion* of the *Underſtanding*, before it proceedeth to *compare* things together. But the *chooſing* act of the *will* is a following act, and ſuppoſeth the *comparing practical* Act of the *Underſtanding*; and theſe two Acts may often be carried to *contrary* Objects, without any fault at all in the perſon.

2. An unfeigned willingneſs may have divers degrees. Some things I am ſo far willing of, as that I will do all that lyeth in my

power to accompliſh it: and ſome things I am truly willing *another* ſhould do, when yet I will not do all that ever I am able to procure it, having many Reaſons to diſſwade me there-from; though yet I will do all that belongs to me to do.

3. The will of *a Ruler, as ſuch*, is manifeſted in *making and executing Laws*: but the will of *a man* in his *ſimple natural capacity*, or as *abſolute Lord* of his *own*, is manifeſted in deſiring or reſolving of *events*.

4. A Rulers will, as *Law-giver*, is firſt and principally that his *Laws be obeyed*: and not at all that the penalty be executed on any, but only on ſuppoſition that they *will not obey his precepts*. But a Rulers will, as Judge: ſuppoſeth the Law already either kept or broken: and therefore he reſolveth our rewards or puniſhment accordingly.

Having given you thoſe neceſſary Diſtinctions, I ſhall next apply them to the Caſe in hand, in theſe following Propoſitions.

1. It is in the *glaſs* of the *word and Creatures*, that in this life we muſt know God: and ſo, according to the nature of man, we aſcribe to him *Underſtanding and Will*, removing all the imperfections that we can, becauſe we are capable of no higher Poſitive conceptions of him.

2. And

2. And on the ſame grounds we do (with the Scripture) *diſtinguiſh* between the *Acts of Gods Will*; as diverſified from the reſpects or the objects, though as to Gods *Eſſence* they are all one.

3. And the boldlier, becauſe that when we ſpeak of Chriſt, we have the more ground for it from his Humane Nature.

4. And thus we ſay, that the *ſimple Complacency*, *Will*, or *Love* of God *is* to all that is *Naturally*, or *Morally good*, according to the *Nature* and *Degree* of its *Goodneſs*. And ſo he hath pleaſure in the Converſion and Salvation of all, which yet will never come to paſs.

5. And God as *Ruler* and *Law-giver* of the world, hath ſo far a *Practicall Will* for their ſalvation, as to make them a free *Deed of Gift of Chriſt and Life*, and an Act of Oblivion for all their ſins, ſo be it they will not unthankfully reject it; and to command his Meſſengers to offer this Gift to all the world, and perſwade them to accept it. And ſo, he doth *all* that *as Law-giver or Promiſer* belongs to him to do for their Salvation.

6. But yet he reſolveth as *Law-giver*, that they that will not turn ſhall dye: And as *Judge*, when their day of grace is paſt, he will execute that Decree.

7. So that he thus unfeignedly willeth the Converſion of thoſe that never will be Converted, but not as *Abſolute Lord* with the *fulleſt efficacious Reſolution*, nor as a thing which he reſolveth ſhall undoubtedly come to paſs, or would engage all his power to accompliſh. It is in the power of a Prince to ſet a guard upon a murderer to ſee that he ſhall not murder and be hanged. But if upon good reaſon he forbear this, and do but ſend to his ſubjects, and warn and intreat them not to be murderers, I hope he may well ſay that he would not have them murder and be hanged; he takes no pleaſure in it, but rather that they forbear and live. And if he do more for ſome, upon ſome ſpecial reaſon, he is not bound to do ſo by all. The King may well ſay to all the murderers and Felons in the Land, [*I have no pleaſure in your death, but rather that you would obey my Laws and live: but if you will not, I am reſolved for all this, that you ſhall die.*] The Judge may truly ſay to the Thief or murderer, [*Alas man, I have no delight in thy death: I had rather thou hadſt kept the Law, and ſaved thy life: but ſeeing thou haſt not, I muſt condemn thee, or elſe I ſhould be unjuſt.*] So though God have no *Pleaſure* in your *Damnation*, and therefore cals upon you to *Return and Live*; yet he hath

hath *Pleaſure in the Demonſtration of his own Juſtice*, and the executing his *Laws*; and therefore he is for all this fully reſolved, that, if you *will not be Converted*, you ſhall be *Condemned*. If God were ſo much againſt the death of the wicked, as that he were reſolved to do all that he can to hinder it, then no man ſhould be condemned: whereas Chriſt telleth you, that few will be ſaved. But ſo far God is againſt your Damnation, as that he will teach you, and warn you, and ſet before you life and death, and offer you your choice, and command his Miniſters to intreat you not to Damn your ſelves, but accept his Mercy, and ſo to leave you without excuſe; but if this will not do, and if ſtill you be Unconverted, he profeſſeth to *you*, he is reſolved of your damnation, and hath commanded us to ſay to you in his Name, *Verſ.* 8. *O wicked man, thou ſhalt ſurely die!* And Chriſt hath little leſs than ſworn it over and over, with a *Verily, verily Except ye be Converted and born again, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, *Mat.* 18. 3. *John.* 3. 3. Mark that he ſaith [*You cannot*] It is in vain to hope for it, and in vain to dream that God is willing of it; for it is a thing that *cannot* be.

In a word, you ſee then the meaning of

the Text, that God the great *Law-giver* of the world, doth take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they Turn and Live; though yet he be resolved that none shall Live but those that Turn; and, as *Judge*, even delighteth in Justice, and manifesting his hatred of sin; though not in their misery which they have brought upon themselves, in it self considered.

2. And for the *proofs* of the point, I shall be very brief in them, because I suppose you easily believe it already.

1. The very *gracious nature* of God proclaimed; *Exod.*24.6. & 26.6. and frequently elsewhere, may assure you of this; that he hath no pleasure in your death.

2. If God had more pleasure in thy Death, than in thy Conversion and Life, he would not have so frequently commanded thee in his word to Turn; he would not have made thee such promises of Life, if thou wilt but Turn; he would not have perswaded thee to it by so many reasons. The tenour of his *Gospel* proveth the point.

3. And his Commission that he hath given to the Ministers of the Gospel, doth fully prove it. If God had taken more pleasure in thy damnation, than in thy Con-

Converſion and Salvation, he would never have charged us to offer you Mercy, and to teach you the Way of Life both publickly and privately, and to intreat and beſeech you to turn and live; to acquaint you with your ſins; and foretell you of your danger, and to do all that poſſibly we can for your Converſion, and to continue patiently ſo doing, though you ſhould hate or abuſe us, for our pains. Would God have done this, and appointed his Ordinances for your good, if he hath taken pleaſure in your death?

4. It is proved alſo by the courſe of his providences. If God had rather you were damned than Converted and Saved, he would not ſecond his word with his Works, and entice you by his daily kindneſs to himſelf, & give you all the mercies of this Life, which are his means *to lead you to repentance*, *Rom.* 2.4. and bring you ſo often under his Rod, to force you into your wits: he would not ſet ſo many examples before your eyes; no nor wait on you ſo patiently as he doth from day to day, and year to year. Theſe be not ſigns of one that taketh pleaſure in your death. If *this* had been his delight, how eaſily could he have had thee long ago in Hell? How oft before this, could he have caſt thee

thee away in the midſt of thy ſins with a curſe, or oath, or lye in thy mouth, in thy ignorance, and pride, and ſenſuality? When thou waſt laſt in thy drunkenneſs, or laſt deriding the wayes of God; how eaſily could he have ſtopt thy breath, and tamed thee with his Plagues, and made thee ſober in another world! Alas, how ſmall a matter is it for the Almighty to rule the Tongue of the prophaneſt railer, and tye the hands of the moſt malicious perſecutor, or calm the fury of the bittereſt of his enemies, and make them know that they are but worms? If he ſhould but frown upon thee, thou wouldſt drop into thy grave. If he gave Commiſſion to one of his Angels to go and deſtroy ten thouſand ſinners, how quickly would it be done! how eaſily can he lay thee upon the bed of languiſhing, and make thee lye roaring there in pain, and make thee eat the words of reproach which thou haſt ſpoken againſt his ſervants, his Word, his worſhip and his holy Wayes? And make thee ſend to beg their prayers whom thou didſt deſpiſe in thy preſumption? How eaſily can he lay that fleſh under gripes and groans, and make it too weak to hold thy ſoul, and make it more loathſome than the dung of the Earth? That fleſh which now muſt have what it loves, &

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muſt not be diſpleaſed though God be diſpleaſed; and muſt be humoured in meats, and drink, and cloaths, whatever God ſay to the contrary; How quickly would the frowns of God conſume it? When thou waſt paſſionately defending thy ſin, and quarrelling with them that would have drawn thee from it; and ſhewing thy ſpleen againſt the reprover, and pleading for the works of Darkneſs; how eaſily could God have ſnatcht thee away in a moment, and ſet thee before his dreadful Majeſty; where thou ſhouldſt ſee tent houſand times ten thouſand of glorious Angels waiting on his Throne? and have called thee there to plead thy Cauſe, and asked thee, *What haſt thou now to ſay againſt thy Creator, his Truth, his Servants, or his holy ways? Now plead thy cauſe, and make the beſt of it thou canſt. Now what canſt thou ſay in excuſe of thy ſin? Now give account of thy worldlyneſs and fleſhly life, of thy time, of all the Mercies thou haſt had.* O how thy ſtubborn heart would have melted, and thy proud looks be taken down, and thy Countenance be appalled, and thy ſtout words turned into ſpeechleſs ſilence, or dreadful cries; if God had but ſet thee thus at his Bar, and pleaded his own Cauſe with thee, which thou haſt here ſo maliciouſly pleaded againſt! How eaſily can

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he at any time ſay to thy guilty ſoul, [*Come away and live in that fleſh no more till the Reſurrection*] and it cannot reſiſt? A word of his mouth would take off the poiſe of thy preſent life, and then all thy parts and powers would ſtand ſtill: and if he ſay unto thee, [*Live no longer*, or *live in Hell*] thou couldſt not diſobey.

But God had yet done none of this; but hath patiently forborn thee, and mercifully upheld thee; and given thee that breath which thou didſt breathe out againſt him, and given thoſe Mercies which thou didſt ſacrifice to thy fleſh, and afforded thee that proviſion, which thou ſpenteſt to ſatisfie thy greedy throat: he gave thee every minute of that time which thou didſt waſte in idleneſs, or drunkenneſs, or worldlineſs: and doth not all his Patience, and mercy ſhew that he deſired not thy damnation? Can the Candle burn without the Oyl? Can your houſes ſtand without the Earth to bear them? As well as you can live an hour without the ſupport of God. And why did he ſo long ſupport thy life, but to ſee when thou wouldſt bethink thee of the folly of thy wayes, and return and live? Will any man purpoſely put Arms into his enemies hands to reſiſt him? or hold a candle to a murderer that is killing his children,

children, or to an idle ſervant that plaies or ſleeps the while? Surely it is to ſee whether thou wilt at laſt Return and Live, that God hath ſo long waited on thee.

5. It is further proved by the ſufferings of his Son, that God taketh no pleaſure in the death of the wicked; Would he have ranſomed them from death at ſo dear a rate? Would he have aſtoniſhed Angels and men by his condeſcenſion? Would God have dwelt in fleſh, and have come in the form of a ſervant, and have aſſumed Humanity into one perſon with the God-head? And would Chriſt have lived a life of ſuffering, and died a curſed death for ſinners, if he had rather taken pleaſure in their death? Suppoſe you ſaw him but ſo buſie in preaching and healing of them, as you find him in *Mark* 3. 21. or ſo long in faſting, as in *Mat.* 4. or all night in prayer, as in *Luke* 6. 12. or praying with the drops of blood trickling from him inſtead of ſweat, as *Luke* 22.44. or ſuffering a curſed death upon the Croſs, and pouring out his ſoul as a ſacrifice for our ſins: Would you have thought theſe the ſigns of one that delighteth in the death of the wicked?

And think not to extenuate it by ſaying, that it was only for his Elect. For it was *thy* ſin, and the ſin of all the World that lay upon

upon our Redeemer; and his ſacrifice and ſatisfaction is *ſufficient* for all, and the fruits of it are offered to one as well as another; but it is true, that it was never the intent of his mind to pardon and ſave any that would not by faith and repentance be Converted. If you had ſeen and heard him weeping and bemoaning the ſtate of diſobedient impenitent people, *Luke* 19. 41, 42. or complaining of their ſtubbornneſs, as *Mat.* 23. 37. *Oh Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, how oft would I have gathered thy Children together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings, and ye would not?* Or if you had ſeen and heard him on the Croſs Praying for his Perſecutors [*Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*] would you have ſuſpected that he had delighted in the death of the wicked; even of thoſe that periſh by their wilful unbelief. When *God hath ſo loved*, (not only loved, but *ſo loved*,) *as to give his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him*, (by an effectual Faith) *ſhould not periſh, but have Everlaſting Life*: I think he hath hereby proved againſt the malice of men and Devils, that he takes no pleaſure in the Death of the wicked, but had rather that they would *Turn* and *Live*.

6. Laſtly, If all this will not yet ſatisfie you, take

take his own word, that knoweth beſt his own mind, or at leaſt believe his Oath: but this leadeth me up to the fourth Doctrine.

Doct. 4. *THE Lord hath confirmed to us by his Oath, that he hath no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he Turn and Live: that he may leave man no pretence to queſtion the truth of it.*

If you dare queſtion his Word, I hope you dare not queſtion his Oath. As Chriſt hath ſolemnly proteſted that the Unregenerate and Unconverted cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, *Mat.*18. 3. *John* 3. 3. So God hath ſworn that his pleaſure is not in their death, but in their Converſion and Life. And as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Heb.*6.13,16,17,18. *Becauſe he can ſwear by no greater than himſelf*, he ſaith, *As I live*, &c. *For men verily ſwear by the greater, and an Oath for Confirmation is to them an end of ſtrife: wherein God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the heirs of Promiſe the immutability of his Counſel, confirmed it by an Oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lye, we might have a ſtrong Conſolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the Hope ſet before us, which we have as an Anchor of the*

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Soul both ſure and ſtedfaſt. If there be any man that cannot reconcile this Truth with the Doctrine of Predeſtination, or the actual damnation of the wicked, that's his own ignorance: he hath no pretence left to deny or queſtion therefore the truth of the point in hand: For this is confirmed by the oath of God, and therefore muſt not be diſtorted, to reduce it to other points: but doubtful points muſt rather be reduced to it, and certain truths muſt be believed to agree with it, though our ſhallow brains do hardly diſcern the agreement.

Uſe.

I Do now intreat thee, if thou be an Unconverted ſinner that heareſt theſe words, that thou wouldſt ponder a little upon the forementioned Doctrines, and bethink thy ſelf a while, who it is that takes pleaſure in thy ſin and damnation? Certainly, it is not God: he hath ſworn for his part that he takes no pleaſure in it. And I know it is not the pleaſing of him that you intend in it. You dare not ſay, that you drink, and ſwear, and neglect holy duties, and quench the motions of the Spirit, to pleaſe God. That were as if you ſhould reproach the Prince, and break his

his Laws, and ſeek his death, and ſay, You did all this to pleaſe him.

Who is it then that takes pleaſure in your ſin and death? Not any that bear the image of God, for they muſt be like-minded to him. God knows, its ſmall pleaſure to your faithful Teachers to ſee you ſerve your deadly enemy, and madly venture your eternal ſtate, and wilfully run into the flames of Hell. Its ſmall pleaſure to them to ſee upon your ſouls (in the ſad effects) ſuch blindneſs and heardheartedneſs, and careleſneſs, and preſumption; ſuch wilfulneſs in evil, and ſuch unteachableneſs, and ſtifneſs againſt the wayes of life and peace; they Know, theſe are marks of death, and of the wrath of God, and they know from the Word of God, whats like to be the end of them: And therefore it is no more pleaſure to them, than to a tender Phyſitian to ſee the Plague marks break out upon his Patient. Alas, to foreſee your everlaſting Torments, and know not how to prevent them! To ſee how near you are to Hell, and we cannot make you believe it, and conſider it! To eſe how eaſily, how certainly you might ſcape, if we knew but how to make you willing! How fair you are for everlaſting ſalvation, if you would but Turn and do your beſt, and make it the

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care and buſines of your lives! but you will not do it. If our lives lay on it, we cannot perſwade you to it. We ſtudie day and night what to ſay to you, that may convince you and perſwade you, and yet it is undone: we lay before you the Word of God, and ſhew you the very Chapter and Verſe where it is written that you cannot be ſaved except you be converted; and yet we leave the moſt of you as we find you: We hope you will believe the Word of God, though you believe not us, and that you will regard it when we ſhew you the plain Scripture for it: but we hope in vain and labour in vain, as to any ſaving change upon your hearts. And do you think that this is a pleaſant thing to us? Many a time in ſecret prayer we are fain to complain to God with ſad hearts [*Alas Lord, we have ſpoken to them in thy Name, but they little regard us: we have told them what thou bidſt us tell them concerning the danger of an unconverted ſtate, but they do not believe us: we have told them that thou haſt proteſted, that there is no peace to the wicked,* Iſa.48. 22. and 57. 21. *but the worſt of them all will ſcarce believe that they are wicked; we have ſhewed them thy Word, where thou haſt ſaid, that if they live after the fleſh they ſhall die,* Rom.8.13. *but they ſay, They will believe*

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in thee, when they will not believe thee; and that they will truſt in thee, when they give no credit to thy word, and when they hope that the threatnings of thy Word are falſe, they will yet call this a hoping in God: and though we ſhew them where thou haſt ſaid, that when a wicked man dieth all his hopes periſh, yet cannot we perſwade them from their deceitful hopes, Prov. 11.7. *We tell them what a baſe unprofitable thing ſin is; but they love it; and therefore will not leave it. We tell them how dear they buy this pleaſure, and what they muſt pay for it in everlaſting Torment, and they bleſs themſelves and will not believe it; but will do as the moſt do: and becauſe God is merciful, they will not believe him, but will venture their ſouls, come on it what will: We tell them how ready the Lord is to receive them; and this doth but make them delay their Repentance, and be bolder in their ſin. Some of them ſay they purpoſe to repent, but they are ſtill the ſame; and ſome ſay they do repent already why yet they are not Converted from their ſins. We exhort them, we intreat them, we offer them our help, but we cannot prevail with them; but they that were drunkards, are drunkards ſtill; and they that were voluptuous fleſh-pleaſing wretches, are ſuch ſtill; and they that were worldlings, are worldlings ſtill: and they that*

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were ignorant, and proud, and ſelf-conceited are ſo ſtill. Few of them will ſee and confeſs their ſin, and fewer will forſake it, but comfort themſelves that all men are ſinners; as if there were no difference between a Converted ſinner and an Unconverted: Some of them will not come near us, when we are willing to inſtruct them, but think they know enough already, and need not our inſtruction: and ſome of them will give us the hearing, and do what they liſt; and moſt of them are like dead men that cannot feel; ſo that when we tell them of the matters of everlaſting Conſequence, we cannot get a word of it to their hearts. If we do not obey them, and humour them in baptizing the children of the moſt obſtinately wicked, and giving them the Lords Supper, and doing all that they would have us, though never ſo much againſt the Word of God, they will hate us and rail at us: but if we beſeech them but to confeſs and forſake their ſins and ſave their ſouls, they will not do it. We tell them, if they will but Turn we will deny them none of the Ordinances of GOD, neither Baptiſme to their children, nor the Lords Supper to themſelves: but they will not hear us: they would have us to diſobey God, and damn our own ſouls, to pleaſe them; and yet they will not turn and ſave their own Souls to pleaſe God. They are wiſer in

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their own eyes than all their Teachers; they rage and are confident in their own way; and if we would never ſo fain, we cannot change them. Lord, this is the caſe of our miſerable neighbours, and we cannot help it: we ſee them ready to drop into Hell, and we cannot help it: we know if they would unfeignedly turn, they might be ſaved; but we cannot perſwade them: if we would beg it of them on our knees; we cannot perſwade them to it: if we would beg it of them with tears, we cannot perſwade them: and what more can we do?

Theſe are the ſecret complaints and moans that many a poor Miniſter is fain to make. And do you think that he hath any *Pleaſure* in this? Is it a *pleaſure* to him to ſee you go on in ſin, and cannot ſtop you? to ſee you ſo miſerable, and cannot ſo much as make you ſenſible of it? to ſee you merry, when you are not ſure to be an hour out of Hell? to think what you muſt for ever ſuffer, becauſe you will not turn? and to think what an everlaſting life of Glory you wilfully deſpiſe and caſt away? What ſadder thing can you bring to their hearts? and how can you deviſe to grieve them more?

Who is it then that you pleaſure by your ſin and death? It is none of your underſtanding godly friends. Alas, it is the grief of their

their ſouls to ſee your miſery, and they lament you many a time when you give them little thanks for it, and when you have not hearts to lament your ſelves.

Who is it then that takes pleaſure in your ſin? It is none but three great enemies of God, whom your renounced in your Baptiſme, and now are turned falſely to ſerve.

1. The Devil indeed takes pleaſure in your ſin and death: For this is the very end of all his temptations. For this he watches night and day: You cannot deviſe to pleaſe him better, than to go on in ſin: How glad is he when he ſees thee going to the Alehouſe, or other ſin, and when he heareth thee curſe, or ſwear, or rail? How glad is he when he heareth thee revile the Miniſter that would draw thee from thy ſin, and help to ſave thee? Theſe are his delight.

2. The wicked alſo are delighted in it: For it is agreeable to their nature.

3. But I know, for all this, that it is not the pleaſing of the Devil, that you intend even when you pleaſe him: but it is your *own fleſh*, the greateſt and moſt dangerous enemy, that you intend to pleaſe. It is the fleſh that would be pampered, that would be pleaſed in meat, and drink, and cloathing, that would be pleaſed in your company, and pleaſed in ap-

applauſe and credit with the world, and pleaſed in ſports, and luſts, and idleneſs; this is the Gulf that devoureth all. This is the very god that you ſerve, (for the Scripture ſaith of ſuch, *that their bellies are their gods*, Phil. 3. 18.)

But I beſeech you ſtay a little, and conſider the buſineſs.

1. *Queſt.* Should your Fleſh be pleaſed before your Maker? Will you diſpleaſe the Lord, and diſpleaſe your Teachers, and your godly friends, and all to pleaſe your bruitiſh Appetites, or ſenſual deſires? Is not God worthy to be the Ruler of your fleſh? If *He* ſhall not rule it, He will not ſave it: you cannot in Reaſon expect that he ſhould.

2. *Queſt.* Your *fleſh* is pleaſed with your ſin: but is your *Conſcience* pleaſed? Doth not *it* grudge within you, and tell you ſometimes that all is not well, and that your Caſe is not ſo ſafe as you make it to be? and ſhould not your ſoul and conſcience be pleaſed before that corruptible fleſh?

3. *Queſt.* But is not your *fleſh* preparing for its *own diſpleaſure* alſo? it loves the bait, but doth it love the hook? It loves the ſtrong drink and ſweet morſels; it loves its eaſe, and ſports, and merriment; it loves to be rich and well ſpoken of by men, and to be

ſome body in the world: but doth it love the curſe of God? Doth it love to ſtand trembling before his Bar, and to be judged to everlaſting fire? Doth it love to be tormented with the Devils for ever? Take all together; for there is no ſeparating ſin and hell, but only by Faith and true Converſion; if you will keep one, you muſt have the other. If Death and Hell be pleaſant to you, no wonder then if you go on in ſin: but if they be not (as I am ſure they be not) then what if ſin were never ſo pleaſant, is it worth the loſs of Life Eternal? Is a little drink, or meat, or eaſe; is the good words of ſinners; is the riches of this world to be valued above the Joyes of Heaven? Or are they worth the ſufferings of Eternal fire? Sirs, theſe queſtions ſhould be conſidered before you go any further, by every man that hath reaſon to conſider, and that believes he hath a ſoul to ſave or loſe.

Well, the Lord here ſweareth that *he* hath no pleaſure in your death, but rather that you would Turn and Live: if yet you will go on, and dye rather than Turn, remember it was not to *Pleaſe God* that you did it: it was to pleaſe the world, and to pleaſe your ſelves. And if men will damn *themſelves to pleaſe themſelves*, and run into endleſs *Tor-*

ment

ments for *Delight*, and have not the wit, the hearts, the grace, to hearken to God or man, that would reclaim them, what Remedy but they muſt take what they get by it, and repent it in another manner, when it is too late! Before I proceed any further in the Application, I ſhall come to the next Doctrine; which giveth me a fuller ground for it.

Doct. 5. *SO Earneſt is God for the Converſion of ſinners, that he doubleth his Commands and Exhortations with vehemency; Turn ye, Turn ye, Why will ye die?*

This Doctrine is the Application of the former, as by a Uſe of Exhortation, and accordingly I ſhall handle it. Is there ever an unconverted ſinner that heareth theſe vehement words of God? Is there ever a man or woman in this Aſſembly that is yet a ſtranger to the renewing ſanctifying work of the Holy Ghoſt? (It is an happy Aſſembly, if it be not ſo with the moſt) Hearken then to the voice of your Maker, and turn to him by Chriſt without delay. Would you know the Will of God? Why this is his Will, that you preſently Turn. Shall the living God send ſo earneſt a Meſſage to his Creatures,

and ſhould they not obey? Hearken then all you that live after the fleſh; the Lord that gave thee thy breath and being, hath ſent a Meſſage to thee from Heaven; and this is his Meſſage, [*Turn ye, Turn ye, why will ye die?*] He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Shall the voice of the Eternal Majeſty be neglected? If he do but terribly thunder, thou art afraid. O but this voice doth more nearly concern thee. If he did but tell thee, Thou ſhalt die to morrow, thou wouldſt not make light of it. O but this word concerneth thy life or death everlaſting. It is both a Command and an Exhortation. As if he had ſaid to thee, [*I charge thee upon the allegiance that thou oweſt to me thy Creator and Redeemer, that thou renounce the fleſh, the world, and the Devil, and Turn to me that thou maiſt live. I condeſcend to intreat thee, as thou either loveſt or feareſt him that made thee: as thou loveſt thine own life, even thine everlaſting Life, Turn and Live: as ever thou wouldſt eſcape eternal miſery, Turn, Turn, for why will thou die?*] And is there a heart in Man, in a reaſonable creature, that can once refuſe ſuch a Meſſage, ſuch a Command, ſuch an Exhortation as this! O what a thing then is the heart of man!

Hearken then all that love your ſelves, and

and all that regard your own ſalvation; Here is the joyfulleſt Meſſage that ever was ſent to the ears of man, *Turn ye, Turn ye, why will ye die?* You are not yet ſhut up under deſperation. Here is mercy offered you; Turn and you ſhall have it. O Sirs, with what glad and joyful hearts ſhould you receive theſe Tidings! I know this is not the firſt time that you have heard it? but how have you regarded it, or how do you regard it now? Hear all you Ignorant, careleſs ſinners, the Word of the Lord! Hear all you worldlings, you ſenſual fleſh-pleaſers; you Gluttons and Drunkards, and Whoremongers, and Swearers; you Railers and back-biters, Slanderers and Lyars; *Turn ye, Turn ye, why will ye die?*

Hear all you cold and outſide Profeſſors, and all that are ſtrangers to the life of Chriſt, and never knew the Power of his Croſs and Reſurrection, and never felt your hearts warmed with his love, and live not on him as the ſtrength of your ſouls; *Turn ye, Turn ye, why will ye die?*

Hear all that are void of the Love of God, whoſe hearts are not toward him, nor taken up with the Hopes of Glory, but ſet more by your earthly proſperity and delights, than by the Joyes of Heaven; all you

that are Religious but a little on theby, and give God no more than your fleſh can ſpare; that have not denied your carnal ſelves, and forſaken all that you have for Chriſt, in the eſtimation and grounded reſolution of your ſouls, but have ſome one thing in the world ſo dear to you, that you cannot ſpare it for Chriſt, if he require it, but will rather venture on his diſpleaſure than forſake it; *Turn ye, Turn ye; why will you die?*

If you never heard it, or obſerved it before, Remember that you were told from the Word of God this day, that if you will but Turn, you may Live; and if you will not Turn, you ſhall ſurely die.

What now will you do, Sirs? What is your reſolution? Will you Turn, or will you not? Halt not any longer between two opinions: If the Lord be God, follow him: if your fleſh be God, then ſerve it ſtill. If Heaven be better than earth and fleſhly pleaſures, come away then and ſeek a better Countrey, and lay up your Treaſure where ruſt and moths do not corrupt, and thieves cannot break through and ſteal, and be awakened at laſt with all your might to ſeek the Kingdom that cannot be moved, *Heb.* 12. 28. and to employ your lives on an higher deſign, and turn the ſtream of your cares and labours ano-

another way than formerly you have done. But if Earth be better than Heaven, or will do more for you, or laſt you longer; then keep it, and make your beſt of it, and follow it ſtill. Sirs, are you reſolved what to do? if you be not, I will ſet a few more moving Conſiderations before you, to ſee if reaſon will make you reſolve.

Conſider firſt, *What preparations Mercy hath made for your ſalvation*: and what pitty it is that any man ſhould be damned after all this. The time was when the flaming ſword was in the way, and the curſe of Gods Law would have kept thee back, if thou hadſt been never ſo willing to turn to God: The time was when thy ſelf and all the friends that thou haſt in the world, could never have produced thee the pardon of thy ſins paſt, though thou hadſt never ſo much lamented and reformed them. But Chriſt hath removed this impediment by the ranſom of his blood. The time was that God was wholly unreconciled, as being not ſatisfied for the violation of his Law: But now he is ſo far ſatisfied and reconciled, as that he hath made thee a free Act of Oblivion, and a free deed of Gift of Chriſt and Life, and offereth it to thee, and intreateth thee to accept it, and it may be thine if thou wilt. For, *he*

was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and hath committed to us the word of actual reconciliation, 2 *Cor.*5. 18,19. Sinners, we are commanded to do this Message to you all, as from the Lord, [*Come for all things are ready*, *Luke* 14.17.] Are *all things ready*, and are *you unready? God* is ready to entertain you, and pardon all that you have done against him, if you will but come. As *long* as you have sinned, as *wilfully* as you have sinned, as *hainously* as you have sinned, he is ready to cast all behind his back, if you will but come. Though you have been Prodigals, and run away from God, and have staid so long, he is ready even to meet you, and embrace you in his Arms, and rejoyce in your Conversion, if you will but Turn. Even the earthly worldling, and swinish drunkard, may find God ready to bid them welcome, if they will but come. Doth not this turn thy heart within thee? O sinner, if thou have an heart of flesh, and not of stone in thee, methinks this should melt it. Shall the dreadful infinite Majesty of Heaven even wait for thy returning, and be ready to receive thee, who hast abused him, and forgotten him so long? shall he delight in thy Conversion, that might at any time glorifie his Justice in thy damnation, and yet doth it not

melt

melt thy heart within thee, and art thou not yet ready to come in? Haſt thou not as much reaſon to be ready to come, as God hath to invite thee, and bid thee welcome?

But that's not all; *Chriſt* hath done his part on the *Croſs*, and made ſuch way for thee to the Father, that on *his* account thou maiſt be welcome if thou wilt come. And yet art thou not ready?

A *Pardon* is ready expreſly granted and offered thee in the Goſpel. And yet art thou not ready?

The *Miniſters* of the Goſpel are Ready to aſſiſt thee, to inſtruct thee, and pronounce the abſolving words of peace to thy ſoul; they are ready to pray for thee and to ſeal up thy pardon by the adminiſtration of the holy Sacrament, and yet art thou not ready?

All that fear God about thee, are ready to rejoyce in thy Converſion, and to receive thee into the Communion of Saints, and to give thee the right hand of fellowſhip, yea though thou hadſt been one that had been caſt out of their ſociety: they dare not but forgive where God forgiveth, when it is manifeſt to them by thy confeſſion and amendment: they dare not ſo much as hit thee in the teeth with thy former ſins, becauſe they know that God will not upbraid thee

with them. If thou hadſt been never ſo ſcandalous, if thou wouldſt but heartily be Converted and come in, they would not refuſe thee, let the world ſay what they would againſt it. And are *all theſe ready* to receive thee, and yet art *thou not ready to come in?*

Yea, *Heaven* it ſelf is ready: the Lord will receive thee into the glory of his Saints; as vile a beaſt as thou haſt been, if thou wilt but be cleanſed; thou maiſt have a place before his Throne: his *Angels* will be ready to guard thy ſoul to the place of Joy, if thou do but unfeignedly come in. And is *God Ready, the Sacrifice of Chriſt Ready, the Promiſe Ready,* and *Pardon Ready?* Are *Miniſters ready,* and the *People of God Ready,* and *Heaven* it ſelf *Ready,* and *Angels Ready,* and all theſe but waiting for thy Converſion; and yet art *thou* not Ready? What not Ready to *live,* when thou haſt been *dead* ſo long? not ready to come to thy *right underſtanding* (as the Prodigal is ſaid to *come to himſelf*, *Luke* 15. 17.) when thou haſt been *beſide thy ſelf ſo long?* Not ready to be *ſaved,* when thou art even ready to be *condemned?* Art thou not ready to lay *hold on Chriſt* that would deliver thee, when thou art even ready to *drown and ſink* into damnation? Art thou not ready to be ſaved from Hell

when thou art even ready to be caſt remedileſly into it? Alas man! doſt thou know what thou doſt? if thou die unconverted, there is no doubt to be made of thy damnation: and thou art not ſure to live an hour: and *yet* art thou not ready to turn and to come in? O miſerable wretch! haſt thou not ſerved the fleſh and the Devil long enough? Yet haſt thou not enough of ſin? Is it ſo good to thee? or ſo profitable for thee? Doſt thou know what it is, that thou wouldſt yet have *more* of it? Haſt thou had ſo many *Calls*, and ſo many *mercies*, and ſo many *blows*, and ſo many *examples*? Haſt thou ſeen ſo many laid in the grave, and yet art thou not ready to let go thy ſins and come to Chriſt? What! after ſo many convictions, and gripes of Conſcience, after ſo many purpoſes and promiſes, art thou not yet ready to turn and live? Oh that thy eyes, thy heart were opened to know how fair an Offer is now made to thee! and what a joyful meſſage it is that we are ſent on, to bid thee Come, for all things are ready.

2. Conſider alſo what *Calls* thou haſt to *Turn* and *Live*. How *many*, how *loud*, how *earneſt*, how *dreadful*, and yet what encouraging joyful Calls?

For the principal Inviter, it is God him-

ſe

ſelf. He that commandeth Heaven and Earth commandeth thee to Turn; and preſently without delay to Turn: he commands the Sun to run its courſe and to riſe upon thee every morning; and though it be ſo glorious a creature, and many times bigger than all the Earth, yet it obeyeth him, and faileth not one minute of its appointed time. He commandeth all the Planets and the Orbs of Heaven, and they obey; He commandeth the Sea to ebb and flow, and the whole Creation to keep its courſe, and all obey him: The Angels of Heaven obey his Will, when he ſends them to Miniſter to ſuch ſilly worms as we on earth, *Heb.* 1. 14. And yet if he command but a ſinner to *turn he* will not obey him: *He* only thinks himſelf wiſer than God, and *He* cavils and pleads the cauſe of ſin, and will not away. If the Lord Almighty ſay the word, the Heavens and all therein obey him: but if he call but a drunkard out of an Ale-houſe, he will not obey; or if he call a worldly fleſhly ſinner to deny himſelf, and mortifie the fleſh, and ſet his heart on a better inheritance, he will not obey.

If thou hadſt any love in thee, thou wouldſt know the voice, and ſay, *Oh this is my Fathers Call! how can I find in my heart to diſobey?* For the *ſheep* of Chriſt *do know and*

hear

hear his voice, and they follow him, and he giveth them eternal Life, John 10. 4. If thou hadſt any ſpiritual Life and Senſe in thee, at leaſt thou wouldſt ſay, *This Call is the dreadful voice of God, and who dare diſobey?* For ſaith the Prophet, *Amos* 3. 8. *The Lion hath roared, who will not fear?* God is not as man, that thou ſhouldſt dally and play with him: Remember what he ſaid to *Paul* at his Converſion, [*It is hard for thee to kick againſt the pricks, Acts* 9. 5.] Wilt thou yet go on and deſpiſe his Word, and reſiſt his Spirit, and ſtop thine ear againſt his Call? Who is it that will have the worſt of this? Doſt thou know whom thou diſobeyeſt and contendeſt with, and what thou art doing? It were a far wiſer and eaſier task for thee to contend with the Thorns, and ſpurn them with thy bare feet, and beat them with thy bare hands, or put thy head into the burning fire. *Be not deceived, God will not be mocked, Gal.* 6. 7. Whoever elſe be mocked, God will not: you had better play with the fire in your thatch, than with the fire of his burning wrath. *For our God is a conſuming fire, Heb.* 12. 29. O how unmeet a match art thou for God! *It is a fearful thing to fall into his hands, Heb.* 10. 31. and therefore it is a fearful thing to contend with him or reſiſt him.

him. As you love your ſouls, take heed what you do. What will you ſay, if he begin in wrath to plead with you? What will you do, if he take you once in hand? Will you then ſtrive againſt his Judgement, as now ye do againſt his grace? ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.*27.4,6. *Fury is not in me*: (that is, I delight not to deſtroy you: I do it as it were unwillingly: but yet) *who would ſet the Bryars and Thorns againſt me in battle? I would go through them; I would burn them together. Or let him take hold of my ſtrength, that he may make peace with me, and he ſhall make peace with me*] Its an unequal combat for the briers and ſtubble to make war with the fire.

And thus you ſee, *Who it is that calleth you*, that ſhould move you to hear his Call and Turn: ſo conſider alſo, *By what inſtruments, and how often, and how earneſtly he doth it.*

1. Every *leaf* of the *bleſſed Book* of God hath as it were a Voice, and calls out unto thee, *Turn and Live*; *Turn or thou will die.* How canſt thou open it, and read a Leaf or hear a Chapter, and not perceive God bids thee *Turn?*

2. It is the Voice of every *Sermon* that thou heareſt: For what elſe is the ſcope and drift of all, but to call and perſwade, and intreat thee for to *turn?*

3. It

3. It is the Voice of many a *motion* of the *Spirit*, that ſecretly ſpeaks over theſe words again, and urgeth thee to *Turn*.

4. It is likely ſometime it is the Voice of thy own *Conſcience*. Art thou not ſometimes convinced that all is not well with thee? and doth not conſcience tell thee that thou *muſt* be a new man, and take a new courſe, and often call upon thee to *Return?*

5. It is the voice of the gracious *examples* of the *Godly*. When thou ſeeſt them live an heavenly life, and fly from the ſin which is thy delight, this really Calls on thee to *Turn*.

6. It is the voice of all the *Works* of God. For they alſo are Gods Books, that teach thee this leſſon, by ſhewing thee his Greatneſs, and Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, and calling thee to obſerve them, and admire the Creator, *Pſal.* 19. 1 2. *The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament ſheweth his handy-work; Day unto Day uttereth Speech, night unto night ſheweth Knowledge.* Every time the Sun riſeth upon thee, it really calleth thee to *Turn*: as if it ſhould ſay, [*What do I travel and compaſs the world for, but to declare to men the glory of their Maker, and to light them to do his work? And do I ſtill find the doing the work of ſin, and ſleeping out thy*

life

life in negligence? Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the Dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee Light, Epheſ. 5. 14. *The night is ſpent, the day is at hand: it is now high time to awake out of ſleep: Let us therefore caſt off the works of Darkneſs, and let us put on the Armour of Light. Let us walk honeſtly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenneſs, not in chambering and wantonneſs, not in ſtrife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and make no proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfill the luſts thereof*, *Rom.* 13. 11, 12, 13, 14. (This Text was the means of *Auſtins* Converſion.)

7. It is the voice of every *Mercy* thou doſt poſſeſs. If thou couldſt but hear and underſtand them, they all cry out unto thee, *Turn*. Why doth the Earth bear thee, but to ſeek and ſerve the Lord? Why doth it afford thee its fruit, but to ſerve him? Why doth the Air afford thee breath, but to ſerve him? Why do all the creatures ſerve thee with their labours and their lives, but that thou mighteſt ſerve the Lord of them and thee? Why doth he give thee time, and health, and ſtrength, but for to ſerve him? Why haſt thou meat, and drink, and cloaths, but for his ſervice? Haſt thou any thing which thou haſt not received? And if thou didſt receive them,

them, its reaſon thou ſhouldſt bethink thee, *from* whom, and *to what end* and uſe thou didſt receive them. Didſt thou never cry to him for help in thy diſtreſs? and didſt thou not then underſtand that is was thy part to Turn and ſerve him if he would deliver thee? He hath done his part, and ſpared thee yet longer, and tryed thee another and another year; and yet doſt thou not Turn? You know the Parable of the unfruitful fig-tree, *Luke* 13.6,7,8,9. When the Lord had ſaid, *Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?* he was intreated to trie it one year longer, and then if it proved not fruitful, to cut it down. Chriſt himſelf there makes the Application twice over, *ver.* 3. & 5. [*Except ye Repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.*] How many years hath God looked for the fruits of love and holineſs from thee, and hath found none? and *yet* he hath ſpared thee. How many a time by thy wilful ignorance, and careleſneſs, and diſobedience haſt thou provoked Juſtice to ſay, *Cut him down, why cumbereth he the ground?* And yet mercy hath prevailed, and Patience hath forborn the killing damning blow to this day. If thou hadſt the underſtanding of a man within thee, thou wouldſt know that all this calleth thee to *Turn.* Doſt *thou think thou ſhalt ſtill*

eſcape

escape the Judgement of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? but after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous Judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds! Rom. 2. 3, 4, 5, 6.

8. Moreover, it is the voice of every *affliction* to call thee to *make haste and Turn.* Sickness and pain cry *Turn*: and poverty, and loss of friends, and every twig of the chastising rod, cry *Turn*; and yet wilt thou not hearken to the Call? These have come near thee, and made thee *feel*; they have made thee *groan*, and can they not make thee *Turn*?

9. The very frame of thy *Nature* and *Being* it self, bespeaketh thy *Return.* Why hast thou *Reason*, but to Rule thy flesh, and serve thy Lord? Why hast thou an understanding soul, but to learn and know his will and do it? Why hast thou an heart within thee, that can love, and fear, and desire, but that thou shouldst fear him, and love him, and desire after him?

10. Yea thine own *engagements* by promise

miſe to the Lord, do call upon thee to Turn and ſerve him. Thou haſt bound thy ſelf to him by a Baptiſmal Covenant, and renounced the world, the fleſh, and the Devil: this thou haſt confirmed by the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and renewed it at Sacraments, and in times of affliction: And wilt thou promiſe and vow, and never perform; and Turn to God?

Lay all theſe together now, and ſee what ſhould be the iſſue. The holy *Scripture* calls upon thee to *Turn*: the *Miniſters* of Chriſt do call upon thee to *Turn*: The *Spirit* cries Turn: thy *Conſcience* cries Turn: the *godly* by perſwaſions and examples cry Turn: the whole *world* and all the creatures therein that are preſented to thy conſideration cry Turn: The patient *forbearance* of God cries Turn; All the *Mercies* which thou receiveſt cry Turn: the rod of Gods *Chaſtiſement* cries Turn: Thy *Reaſon* and the frame of thy Nature beſpeaks thy Turning: and ſo do all thy *Promiſes* to God; and yet art thou not reſolved to Turn?

3. Moreover, poor hard-hearted ſinner! Didſt thou ever conſider *upon what terms thou ſtandeſt all this while with him that calleth on thee for to Turn?* Thou art his *own*, and *oweſt* him thy ſelf and all thou haſt; and

and may he not *Command* his *own*? Thou art his abſolute ſervant, and ſhouldſt ſerve no other Maſter. Thou ſtandeſt at his *Mercy*, and thy life is in his hand: and he is reſolved to ſave thee upon no other terms: thou haſt many malicious ſpiritual enemies, that would be glad if God would but forſake thee and let them alone with thee, and leave thee to their will: how quickly would they deal with thee in another manner? And thou canſt not be delivered from them, but by Turning unto God. Thou art fallen under his wrath by thy ſin already: and thou knoweſt not how long his patience will yet wait. Perhaps this is the laſt year; perhaps the laſt day: his ſword is even at thy heart, while the word is in thine ear; and if thou Turn not, thou art a dead and undone man. Were thy eyes but open to ſee where thou ſtandeſt, even upon the brink of Hell, and to ſee how many thouſands are *there* already that did not turn, thou wouldſt ſee that its time to look about thee.

Well Sirs, Look inwards now, and tell me, how are your hearts affected with theſe offers of the Lord? You hear what is his mind; he *delighteth* not in your *death*: he calls to you, *Turn*, *Turn*: its a fearful ſign, if all this move thee not, or if it do but half

move

move thee; and much more if it make thee more careleſs in thy miſery, becauſe thou heareſt of the mercifulneſs of God. The working of the medicine will partly tell us whether there be any hope of the Cure. O what glad tidings would it be to thoſe that are now in Hell, if they had but ſuch a Meſſage from God! What a joyful word would it be to hear this [*Turn and Live*:] Yea what a welcome word would it be to thy ſelf, when thou haſt felt that wrath of God but an hour! Or, if after a thouſand, or ten thouſand years torment, thou couldſt but hear ſuch a word from GOD, [*Turn and Live*] and yet wilt thou now neglect it, and ſuffer us to return without our errand?

Behold ſinners, we are ſent here as the Meſſengers of the Lord, to ſet before you Life and Death: What ſay you? which of them will you chooſe? Chriſt ſtandeth as it were by thee, with Heaven in one hand, and Hell in the other, and offereth thee thy choice: which wilt thou chooſe? *The voice of the Lord maketh the Rocks to tremble*, *Pſal.* 26. and is it nothing to hear him threaten thee, if thou wilt not Turn? Doſt thou not underſtand and feel this Voice, [*Turn ye, Turn ye, Why will ye die?*] Why it is the voice of *Love*, of *infinite Love*, of thy beſt and kindeſt Friend,

Friend, as thou mighteſt eaſily perceive by the motion; and yet canſt thou neglect it? It is the Voice of pitty and compaſſion. The Lord ſeeath whether thou art going better than thou doſt, which makes him call after thee, *Turn*, *Turn*: He ſeeth what will become of thee, if thou turn not: He thinketh with himſelf, *Ah this poor ſinner will caſt himſelf into endleſs torments, if he do not Turn: I muſt in Juſtice deal with him according to my righteous Law*; and therefore he calleth after thee, *Turn, turn*, O ſinner! If you did but know the thouſandth part as well as God doth, the danger that is near you, and the miſery that you are running into, we ſhould have no more need to call after you to Turn.

Moreover, this voice that calleth to thee, is the ſame that hath prevailed with thouſands already, and called all to Heaven that are now there: And they would not now for a thouſand Worlds that they had made light of it, and not turned to God. *Now* what are they poſſeſſing that Turned at Gods Call? *Now* they perceive that it was indeed the voice of Love that meant them no more harm than their ſalvation. And if thou wilt obey the ſame Call, thou ſhalt come to the ſame Happineſs. There be millions that muſt for ever lament that they Turned not, but there's

there's never a ſoul in Heaven that is ſorry that they were Converted.

Well Sirs, are you yet reſolved, or are you not? Do I need to ſay any more to you, What will you do? Will you Turn or not? Speak man in thy heart to God, though thou ſpeak not out to me: Speak, leſt he take thy ſilence for a denial. Speak *quickly*, leſt he never make thee the like offer more. Speak *reſolvedly*, and not waveringly; for he will have no *Indifferents* to be his followers. Say in thy heart now without any more delay, even before thou ſtir hence, [*By the Grace of God I am reſolved preſently to turn. And becauſe I know my own inſufficiency, I am reſolved to wait on God for his Grace, and to follow him in his waies, and forſake my former courſes and companions, and give up my ſelf to the guidance of the Lord.*]

Sirs, you are not ſhut up in the darkneſs of Heatheniſm, nor in the deſperation of the damned; Life is before you: and you may have it on reaſonably terms if you will; yea on freecoſt if you will accept it. The way of God lieth plain before you; the Church is open to you; the company of the Godly is open to you; you may have Chriſt, and pardon, and Holineſs, if you will. What ſay you? Will you, or will you not?

If

If you ſay nay, or ſay nothing, and ſtill go on, God is witneſs, and this Congregation is witneſs, and your own Conſciences are witneſſes how fair an offer you had this day. Remember yon might have had Chriſt, and would not. Remember, when you have loſt it, that you might have had Eternal Life as well as others, and would not: and all becauſe you would not Turn;

But let us come to the next Doctrine, and hear your Reaſons.

Doct. 6. THE *Lord condeſcendeth to reaſon the Caſe with Unconverted ſinners, and to ask them why they will die?*

A ſtrange Diſputation it is, both as to the Controverſie; and as to the Diſputants.

1. The Controverſie or Queſtion propounded to diſpute of, is, *Why wicked men will damn themſelves?* Or, *Why they will rather die than Turn?* Whether they have any ſufficient reaſon for ſo doing?

2. The Diſputants are *God* and *man*: the moſt *Holy God*, and *wicked Unconverted ſinners.*

Is it not a ſtrange Thing which God doth ſeem here to ſuppoſe *that* any man ſhould be willing

willing to die, and be damned? Yea *that* this ſhould be the caſe of all the wicked; that is, of the greateſt part of the world; but you will ſay, *This cannot be; for Nature deſireth the preſervation and felicity of it ſelf; and the wicked are more ſelfiſh than others, and not leſs; and therefore how can any man be willing to be damned?*

To which I Anſwer, 1. It is a certain Truth, that no man can be willing of any evil as evil, but only as it hath ſome appearance of good; much leſs can any man be willing to be eternally tormented. Miſery, as ſuch, is deſired by none. 2. But yet for all that, it is moſt true which God here teacheth us, that the cauſe why the wicked die and are damned, is becauſe *they will die and be damned.* And this is true in ſeveral reſpects.

1. Becauſe they will go the way that leads to Hell; though they are told by God and Man whither it goes, and where it ends: and though God hath ſo often profeſſed in his Word, that if they hold on in that way, they ſhall be condemned: and that they ſhall not be ſaved unleſs they Turn, *Iſa.* 48. 22. *and* 57. 21. [*There is no Peace* (ſaith the Lord) *unto the wicked.* Iſa 59. 8. *The way of Peace they know not; there is no Judgement in their goings; They have made them crooked paths:*

Whosoever goeth therein, shall know Peace.] They have the Word and the Oath of the living GOD for it, that if they will not Turn, they shall not enter into his Rest. And yet, wicked they are, and wicked they will be, let God and man say what they will; Fleshly they are, and fleshly they will be: Worldlings they are, and worldlings they will be: though God hath told them that *the Love of the world is enmity to God*, and that *if any man love the world* (in that measure) *the Love of the Father is not in him*, Jam. 4. 4. 1 Joh. 2. 15. so that *consequentially* these men are willing to be damned, though not directly: they are willing of the way to Hell, and love the certain cause of their Torment: though they be not willing of hell it self, and do not love the pain which they must endure.

Is not this the Truth of your case Sirs? You would not burn in hell; But you will kindle the fire by your sin, and cast your selves into it; you would not be tormented with Devils for ever; but you will do that which will certainly procure it, in despite of all that can be said against it. It is just as if you would say, *I will drink this Ratsbane, or other poyson. But yet I will not die. I will cast my self headlong from the top of a Steeple, but yet I will not kill my self: I will thrust this knife*

knife into my heart, but yet I will not take away my life. I will put this fire into the thatch of my house, but yet I will not burn it. Just so it is with wicked men; they will be wicked, and they will live after the flesh and the world, and yet they would not be damned. But do you not know that the means do lead unto the end? and that God hath by his righteous Law concluded that ye must repent or perish? He that will take poyson, may as well say plainly, *I will kill my self*; for it will prove no better in the end: Though perhaps he loved it for the sweetness of the Sugar that was mixt with it, and would not be perswaded that it was poyson, but that he might take it and do well enough; But it is not his conceits, and confidence that will save his Life. So if you will be Drunkards, or Fornicators, or Worldlings, or live after the flesh, you may as well say plainly, *we will be damned:* For so you shall be, unless you Turn, would you not rebuke the folly of a thief or murderer, that would say, [*I will steal and kill, but I will not be hanged*] when he knows that if he doe the one, the Judge in Justice will see that the other be done? If he say, *I will steall and murder*, he may as well say plainly, *I will be hanged.* So if you Will go on in a Carnal Life, you may

as well ſay plainly, *we will go to Hell.*

2. Moreover, *The wicked will not uſe thoſe means without which there is no hope of their Salvation:* He that will not eat, may as well ſay plainly he will not live, unleſs he can tell how to live without meat; He that will not go his journey, may as well ſay plainly he will not come to the end. He that falls into the water and will not come out, nor ſuffer another to help him out, may as well ſay plainly, he will be drowned. So if you be carnal and ungodly, and will not be Converted, nor uſe the *means* by which you ſhould be Converted, but think it more ado than needs, you may as well ſay plainly, you will be damned. For if you have found out a way to be ſaved without Converſion, you have done that which never was done before.

3. Yea this is not all, but the *wicked are unwilling even of ſalvation it ſelf.* Though they may deſire ſomewhat which they call by the name of *Heaven*, yet Heaven it ſelf, conſidered in the true nature of the felicity, they deſire not; Yea their hearts are quite againſt it. Heaven is a ſtate of perfect holineſs, and of continual Love and Praiſe to God, and the wicked have no heart to this. The imperfect Love, and Praiſe, and holineſs which is here to be attained, they have no mind

mind of: much leſs of that which is ſo much greater: The joyes of Heaven are of ſo pure and ſpiritual a nature, that the heart of the wicked cannot truly deſire them.

So that by this time you may ſee on what ground it is that God ſuppoſeth that the wicked are willing of their own deſtruction: They will not turn, though they muſt Turn or Die; they will rather venture on certain miſery, than be converted; and then to quiet themſelves in their ſin, they will make themſelves believe that they ſhall nevertheleſs eſcape.

2. And as this *Controverſie* is matter of wonder (that ever men ſhould be ſuch enemi esto themſelves, as wilfully to caſt away their ſouls) ſo are the *Diſputants* too. That God ſhould ſtoop ſo low, as thus to plead the caſe with man; and that man ſhould be ſo ſtrangely blind and obſtinate, as to need all this in ſo plain a caſe, yea and to reſiſt all this, when their own ſalvation lieth upon the iſſue.

No wonder if they will not hear *us* that are men, when they will not hear the Lord himſelf: As God ſaith, *Ezek.* 3. 7. when he ſent the Prophet to the Iſraelites, [*The houſe of* Iſrael *will not hearken unto thee: For they will not hearken unto me: For all the houſe of*

Iſrael *are impudent and heard-hearted.*] No wonder if they can plead againſt a Miniſter, or a godly neighbour: when they will plead againſt the Lord himſelf, even againſt the plaineſt paſſages of his Word, and think that they have Reaſon on their ſide: When they *weary the Lord with their words*, they ſay, *Wherein have we wearied him? Mal.*2. 17. The Prieſts that *deſpiſed his Name*, durſt ask, *Wherein have we deſpiſed thy Name?* And when they *polluted his Altar, and made the Table of the Lord contemptible*, they durſt ſay, *Wherein have we polluted thee? Mal.*1. 6,7. But, [*Wo unto him* (ſaith the Lord) *that ſtriveth with his Maker! Let the Potſheards ſtrive with the Potſheards of the Earth; Shall the Clay ſay to him that faſhioneth it; What makeſt thou?*] *Iſa.*45. 9.

Queſt. *But why is it that God will Reaſon the Cauſe with man?*

Anſw. 1. Becauſe that man being a reaſonable Creature, is accordingly to be dealt with, and by reaſon to be perſwaded and overcome. God hath therefore endowed them with reaſon, that they might uſe it for him. One would think a reaſonable Creature ſhould not go againſt the cleareſt and greateſt reaſon in the world, when it is ſet before him.

2. At leaſt, men ſhall ſee that God did require

quire nothing of them that was unreasonable, but that what ever he commandeth them, and what ever he forbiddeth them, he hath all the right reason in the world on his side; and they have good reason to obey him, but none to disobey. And thus even the damned shall be forced to justifie God, and confess that it was but reason that they should have turned to him, and they shall be forced to condemn themselves, and confess that they had little reason to cast away themselves by the neglecting of his Grace in the day of their Visitation.

Use.

LOok up your best and strongest Reasons, sinners, if you will make good your way: You see now with whom you have to deal. What saist thou, Unconverted sensual wretch? Darest thou venture upon a dispute with God? Art thou able to confute him? Art thou ready to enter the lists? God asketh thee, Why wilt thou die? Art thou furnished with a sufficient answer? Wilt thou undertake to prove that God is mistaken, and that thou art in the right? O what an undertaking is that! Why, either he or you is

miſtaken, when he is for your Converſion, and you are againſt it; He calls upon you to Turn, and you will not; He bids you do it preſently, even to day, while it is called to day, and you delay, and think it time enough hereafter. He ſaith it muſt be a total change, and you muſt be holy, and new creatures, and born again; and you think that leſs may ſerve the turn, and that its enough to patch up the old man, without becoming new. Who is in the right now? God or you? God calleth on you to Turn and to Live an holy Life, and you will not, by your diſobedient Lives, it appears *you will not*. If you will, why do you not? Why have you not done it all this while? and why do you not fall upon it yet? Your wills have the command of your Lives. We may certainly conclude that you are unwilling to turn, when you do not Turn. And *why will you* not? Can you give any Reaſon for it that is worthy to be called a Reaſon?

I that am but a worm, your fellow creature, of a ſhallow capacity, dare challenge the wiſeſt of you all, to reaſon the caſe with *me*, while I plead my Makers cauſe: and I need not be diſcouraged, when I know I plead but the cauſe that *God* pleadeth, and contend for *him* that will have the beſt at laſt.

Had

Had I but theſe two General Grounds againſt you, I am ſure that you have no good Reaſon on your ſide.

1. I am ſure it can be no good reaſon, which is againſt the God of Truth and reaſon. It cannot be Light that is contrary to the Sun. There is no Knowledge in any Creature, but what it had from God; and therefore none can be wiſer than God. It were damnable preſumption for the higheſt Angel to compare with his Creator: What is it then for a lump of dirt, an ignorant ſot, that knoweth not himſelf, nor his own Soul, that knoweth but little of the things which he ſeeth, yet that is more Ignorant than many of his neighbours, to ſet himſelf againſt the wiſdom of the Lord? It is one of the fulleſt diſcoveries of the horrible wickedneſs of Carnal men, and the ſtark madneſs of ſuch as ſin, that ſo ſilly a mole dare contradict his Maker, and call in queſtion the Word of God, Yea that thoſe people in your Pariſhes, that are ſo beaſtly ignorant, that they cannot give us a reaſonable Anſwer concerning the very Principles of Religion, are yet ſo wiſe in their own conceit, that they dare queſtion the plaineſt Truths of God, yea contradict them and cavil againſt them, when they can ſcarce ſpeak ſenſe, and will believe them

no further than agreeth with their fooliſh wiſdom.

2. And as I know that God muſt needs be in the right, ſo I know the *Caſe* is ſo palpable and groſs which he pleadeth againſt, that no man can have reaſon for it. Is it poſſible that a man can have any Reaſon to break his Maſters Laws? and reaſon to diſhonour the Lord of Glory? and reaſon to abuſe the Lord that bought him? Is it poſſible that a man can have any good reaſon to damne his own Immortal ſoul? Marke the Lords queſtion [*Turn ye, Turn ye, why will you die?*] Is eternal death a thing to be deſired. Are you in Love with Hell? What reaſon have you, wilfully to periſh? If you think you have ſome reaſon to *ſin*, ſhould you not remember that *Death is the wages of ſin? Rom.6.23.* and think whether you have any reaſon to undo your ſelves body and ſoul for ever. You ſhould not only ask whether you love the Adder, but whether you love the ſting? It is ſuch a thing for a man to caſt away his everlaſting happineſs, and to ſin againſt God, that no good reaſon can be given for it: but the more any one pleads for it, the madder he ſheweth himſelf to be. Had you a Lordſhip or a Kingdom offered you for every ſin that you commit; it were not reaſon,

ſon, but madneſs to accept it. Could you by every ſin obtain the higheſt thing on Earth that fleſh deſireth, it were of no conſiderable value to perſwade you in reaſon to commit it. If it were to pleaſe your greateſt or deareſt friends, or to obey the greateſt Prince on earth, or to ſave your lives, or to eſcape the greateſt earthly Miſery, all theſe are of no conſideration, to draw a man in reaſon to the committing of one ſin. If it were a right hand, or a right eye that would hinder your ſalvation, it is the gainfulleſt way to caſt it away, rather than to go to Hell to ſave it. For there is no ſaving a part, when you loſe the whole. So exceeding great are the matters of Eternity, that nothing in this world deſerveth once to be named in compariſon with them: nor can any earthly thing, though it were Life, or Crowns, or Kingdoms, be a reaſonable excuſe for the neglect of matters of ſuch high and Everlaſting Conſequence. A man can have no reaſon to croſs his ultimate End. Heaven is ſuch a thing, that if you loſe it, nothing can ſupply the want, or make up your loſs: And Hell is ſuch a thing, that if you ſuffer it, nothing can remove your miſery, or give you eaſe and comfort. And therefore nothing can be a valuable conſideration to excuſe you for

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neglecting your own Salvation: For, ſaith our Saviour, *What ſhall it profit a man to win all the World, and loſe his own Soul?* Mark 8. 36.

Oh Sirs, that you did but know what matters they are that we are now ſpeaking to you of! The Saints in Heaven have other kind of thoughts of theſe things. If the Devil could come to them that live in the ſight and love of God, and ſhould offer them a Cup of Ale, or a Whore, or merry company, or ſports to tice them away from God and Glory; I pray you tell me, How do you think they would entertain the motion? Nay, or if he ſhould offer them to be Kings on the Earth; Do you think this would tice them down from Heaven! O with what hatred and holy ſcorn would they diſdain and reject the motion! And why ſhould not you do ſo, that have Heaven opened to your faith, if you had but faith to ſee it? There's never a ſoul in Hell but knows by this time, that it was a mad exchange to let go Heaven for fleſhly pleaſure; and that it is not a little mirth, or pleaſure, or worldly riches, or honour, or the good Will or Word of men, that will quench Hell-fire, or make him a ſaver that loſeth his ſoul. O if you had heard what I believe, if you had ſeen

what

what I believe, and that on the credit of the Word of God, you would ſay there can be no reaſon to warrant a man to damn his ſoul: you durſt not ſleep quietly another night, before you had reſolved to Turn and Live.

If you ſee a man put his hand into the fire till it burn off, you'l marvel at it; but this is a thing that a man may have Reaſon for; as Biſhop *Cranmer* had when he burnt off his hand for ſubſcribing to Popery. If you ſee a man cut off a Leg or an Arm, its a ſad ſight; but this is a thing that a Man *may* have good *reaſon* for: as many a man doth, to ſave his Life. If you ſee a man give his body to be burnt to Aſhes, and to be tormented with ſtrappadoes and racks, and refuſe deliverance when it is offered; this is an hard caſe to fleſh and blood. But this a man may have good *reaſon* for; as you may ſee in *Heb.* 11. 33, 34, 35, 36. and as many an hundred Martyrs have done. But for a man to forſake the Lord that made him, and for a man to run into the fire of Hell, when he is *told* of it, and intreated to Turn that he may be ſaved; this is a thing that can have *no Reaſon* in the world, that is *Reaſon indeed*, to juſtifie or excuſe it. For, *Heaven* will pay for the loſs of any thing that we can loſe to get it,

it, or for any labour which we beſtow for it. But nothing can pay for the loſs of Heaven.

I beſeech you now let this word come nearer to your hearts. As you are convinced that you have no Reaſon to deſtroy your ſelves, ſo tell me what Reaſon have you to refuſe to Turn, and live to God. What Reaſon hath the verieſt wordling or drunkard, or ignorant careleſs ſinner of you all, why you ſhould not be as holy as any you know, and be as careful for your ſouls as any other? Will not Hell be as hot to *you* as to *others?* Should not your *own* ſouls be as *dear* to *you* as *theirs* to *them?* Hath not God as much *authority* over *you?* Why then will you not become a ſanctified people as well as they?

O Sirs, when God bringeth the matter down to the very Principles of nature, and ſhews you that you have no more reaſon to be ungodly, than you have to damn your own ſouls; if yet you will not underſtand and Turn, it ſeems a deſperate caſe that you are in.

And now either you *have* Reaſon for what you do, or you *have not*. If *not*; will you go on againſt Reaſon it ſelf? will you do that which you have *no Reaſon* for? But if you thin[k]

think you have, produce them, and make the beſt of your matter. Reaſon the caſe a little with me your follow-creature, which is far eaſier than to reaſon the caſe with God. Tell me man here before the Lord; as if thou wert to die this hour, Why ſhouldſt thou not reſolve to Turn this day, before thou ſtir from the place thou ſtandeſt in? What Reaſon haſt thou to deny, or to delay? Haſt thou any Reaſon that ſatisfieth thine *own Conſcience* for it? Or any that thou dareſt own and plead at the bar of God? If thou haſt, let us hear them, bring them forth, and make them good. But alas, what poor ſtuff, what non-ſenſe inſtead of reaſons do we daily hear from ungodly men? But for their neceſſity I ſhould be aſhamed to name them.

1. One ſaith, *If none ſhall be ſaved but ſuch Converted and Sanctified ones as you talk of, then heaven would be but empty, then God help a great many.*

Anſw. What! It ſeemes you think that God doth not know, or elſe that he is not to believed! Meaſure not all by your ſelves; God hath thouſands and millions of his Sanctified ones: but yet they are few in compariſon of the World, as Chriſt himſelf hath told us, *Mat.*7.13,14. *Luke* 12.32. It better beſeems you to make that Uſe of this Truth

Truth which Christ teacheth you; *Strive to enter in at the strait Gate; for strait is the Gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it; but wide is the Gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many they be that go in thereat.*] Luke 13. 22, 23, 24. [*Fear not little Flock* (saith Christ to his sanctified ones) *for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom*] Luke 12. 32.

Object 2. *I am sure, if such as I go to Hell, we shall have store of company.*

Answ. And will that be any ease or comfort to you? Or do you think you may not have company enough in Heaven? Will you be undone for company? Or will you not believe that God will execute his threatnings, because there be so many that are guilty? All these are silly unreasonable Conceits.

Object. 3. *But are not all men sinners, even the best of you all?*

Answ. But all are not *Unconverted sinners.* The godly live not in gross sins; and their very infirmities are their grief and burden which they daily long, and pray, and strive to be rid of. Sin hath not dominion over them.

Object. 4. *I do not see that Professors are*

any

any better than other men; They will over-reach, and oppreſs, and are as Covetous as any.

Anſw. Whatever hypocrites are, its not ſo with thoſe that are ſanctified. God hath thouſands and ten thouſands that are otherwiſe: Though the malicious world doth accuſe them of what they can never prove, and of that which never entred into their hearts. And commonly they charge them with heart-ſins, which none can ſee but God; becauſe they can charge them with no ſuch wickedneſs in their lives, as they are guilty of themſelves.

Object. 5. *But I am no whoremonger, nor drunkard, nor oppreſſer, and therefore why ſhould you call upon me to be Converted?*

Anſw. As if you were not *born after the fleſh*, and had not lived after the fleſh as well as others! Is it not as great a ſin as any of theſe, for a man to have an earthly mind, and to love the world above God, and to have an unbelieving unhumbled heart? Nay let me tell you more, that many perſons that avoid diſgraceful ſins, are as faſt glued to the world, and as much ſlaves to the fleſh, and as ſtrange to God, and averſe to Heaven in their more civil courſe, as others are in their more ſhameful notorious ſins.

Object. 6. *But I mean no body any harm,*

nor

nor do no harm: and why then ſhould God condemn me?

Anſw. Is it no harm to neglect the Lord that made thee, and the work for which thou cameſt into the world, and to prefer the creature before the Creator, and to neglect grace that is daily offered thee? It is the depth of thy ſinfulneſs to be ſo inſenſible of it: The dead feel not that they are dead. If once thou wert made alive, thou wouldſt ſee more amiſs in thy ſelf, and marvel at thy ſelf for making ſo light of it.

Object. 7. *I think you would make men mad under pretence of Converting them: It is enough to rack the brains of ſinful people, to muſe ſo much on matters too high for them.*

Anſw. 1. Can you be madder than you are already? or at leaſt can there be a more dangerous madneſs, than to neglect your everlaſting welfare, and wilfully undo your ſelves? 2. A man is never well in his wits till he be Converted; He never knows GOD, nor knows ſin, nor knows Chriſt, nor knows the world, nor himſelf, nor what his buſineſs is on Earth, ſo as to ſet himſelf about it, till he be converted. The Scripture ſaith that the wicked are *unreaſonable men*, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 2. and *that the wiſdom of the world is fooliſhneſs with God*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 20. And *Luke* 15. v. 17.

its

its ſaid of the Prodigal, *that when he came to himſelf*, he reſolved to Return. It is a wiſe world when men will diſobey God, and run to Hell for fear of being out of their wits.

2. What is there in the work that Chriſt calls you to, that ſhould drive a man out his wits? Is it the Loving of God, and calling upon him, and comfortable thinking of the glory to come, and the forſaking of our ſins, and loving one another, and delighting our ſelves in the ſervice of God? Are theſe ſuch things as ſhould make men mad?

3. And whereas you ſay that theſe matters are too high for us, you accuſe God himſelf for making this our work, and giving us his Word, and commanding all that will be bleſſed to *meditate in it day and night*. Are the matters which we are *made for* and which we *live for*, *too high* for us to meddle with? This is plainly to unman us, and to make beaſts of us, as if we were like them that muſt meddle with no higher matters than what belongs to fleſh and earth. If Heaven be too high for you to thing on and provide for, it will be too high for you ever to poſſeſs.

4. If God *ſhould* ſometimes ſuffer any weak-headed perſon to be diſtracted by thinking of Eternal things; this is becauſe they

they misunderstand them, and run without a guide: and of the two, I had rather be in the case of such an one, than of the mad unconverted world, that take their distraction to be their wisdom.

Object. 8. *I do not think that God cares so much what men think or speak, or do: as to make so great a matter of it.*

Answ. It seems then you take the word of God to be false, and then what will you believe? But your own reason might teach you better, if you believe not the Scriptures: For you see God set not so light by us, but that he vouchsafed to make us, and still preserveth us, and daily upholdeth us, and provideth for us: and will any wise man make a curious frame for nothing? Will you make or buy a Clock or Watch, and daily look to it, and not care whether it go true or false? Surely if you believe not a particular eye of Providence observing your hearts and lives, you cannot believe or expect any particular Providence to observe your wants and troubles, to relieve you. And if God had so little cared for you as you Imagine, you would never have lived till now: An hundred diseases would have striven which should first destroy you: Yea the Devils would have haunted you, and fetcht

fetcht you away alive, as the great fiſhes devour the leſs, and as ravenous Birds and beaſts devour others. You cannot think that God made man for no end or uſe: And if he made him for any, it was ſure for Himſelf. And can you think he cares not whether his ends be accompliſhed, and whether we do the work that we are made for?

Yea by this Atheiſtical Objection, you make God to have made and upheld *all the world* in vain. For what are all other lower Creatures for, but for man? What doth the Earth but bear us, and nouriſh us? and the Beaſts do ſerve us with their labours and lives, and ſo of the reſt. And hath God made ſo glorious an habitation, and ſet man to dwell in it, and made all his ſervants, and now doth he look for nothing at his hands? not care how he thinks, or ſpeaks, or lives? This is moſt unreaſonable.

Object. 9. *It was a better world when men did not make ſo much ado in Religion.*

Anſw. It hath ever been the cuſtom, to praiſe the times paſt. That world that you ſpeak of, was wont to ſay, It was a better world in their fore fathers dayes, and ſo did they of their fore-fathers: This is but an old cuſtom; becauſe we all feel the evil of our own times, but we ſee not that which was before us. 2. Per-

2. Perhaps you ſpeak as you think: Worldlings think the World is at the beſt when it is agreeable to their minds: and when they have moſt mirth and worldly pleaſure. And I doubt not but the Devil as well as you, would ſay, that then it *was a better world*: for then he had more ſervice and leſs diſturbance. But the World is at the beſt, when God is moſt loved, regarded and obeyed. And how elſe will you know when the World is good or bad, but by this?

Object. 10. *There are ſo many wayes and Religions that we know not which to be of, and therefore we will be even as we are.*

Anſw. Becauſe there are *many*, will you be of that way that you may be *ſure* is wrong? *None* are further out of the way, than Worldly, Fleſhly, Unconverted ſinners. For they do not onely erre in this or that Opinion, as many Sects do, but in the very *ſcope and drift* of their lives. If you were going a Journey that your life lay on, would you ſtop or turn again, becauſe you met with ſome croſs wayes, or becauſe you ſaw ſome travellers go the horſe way, and ſome the foot way, and ſome perhaps break over the hedge, yea, and ſome miſs the way? or would you not rather be the more careful to enquire the way? If you have ſome ſervants

that

that know not how to do your work right, and ſome that are unfaithful, would you take it well at any of the reſt that would therefore be idle and do you no ſervice, becauſe they ſee the reſt ſo bad?

Object. 11. *I do not ſee that it goes any better with thoſe that are ſo godly than with other men. They are as poor, and in as much trouble as others.*

Anſw. And perhaps in much more, when God ſees it meet. They take not earthly proſperity for their wages. They have laid up their Treaſure and hopes in another World, or elſe they are not Chriſtians indeed. The leſs they *have*, the more is *behind*; and they are content to wait till then.

Object. 12. *When you have ſaid all that you can, I am reſolved to hope well, and truſt in God, and do as well as I can and not make ſo much ado.*

Anſw. 1. Is that *doing as well as you can*, when you will not Turn to God; but your heart is againſt his holy and diligent ſervice? It is as well as you *will* indeed: but that's your miſery.

2. My deſire is, That you ſhould Hope and Truſt in God: But for what is it that you will

will Hope? Is it to be ſaved if you turn and be ſanctified? For this you have Gods promiſe; and therefore hope for it and ſpare not. But if you hope to be ſaved without Converſion and an holy Life, this is not to hope in God, but in Satan, or your ſelves. For God hath given you no ſuch promiſe, but told you the contrary: but its Satan and ſelf love that made you ſuch promiſes, and raiſed you to ſuch hopes.

Well, if theſe and ſuch as theſe be all you have to ſay againſt Converſion and an holy Life, your *All* is *Nothing*, and worſe than nothing: And if theſe and ſuch as theſe ſeem Reaſons ſufficient to perſwade you to forſake God, and caſt your ſelves into hell, the Lord deliver you from ſuch Reaſons and from ſuch blind underſtandings, and from ſuch ſenſleſs hardened hearts. Dare you ſtand to ever an one of theſe Reaſons at the Barr of God? Do you think it will then ſerve your turn to ſay, *Lord I did not Turn becauſe I had ſo much to do in the world, or becauſe I did not like the lives of ſome Profeſſors; or becauſe I ſaw men of ſo many minds.* O how eaſily will the light of that day confound and ſhame ſuch reaſonings as theſe? Had you the World to look after? Let the World which you ſerved now pay you your wages, and ſave

ſave you if it can. Had you not *a better World* to look after *firſt?* And were ye not commanded to *ſeek firſt Gods Kingdom and Righteouſneſs*, and promiſed that *other things ſhould be added to you*, *Mat.* 6. 33. And were ye not told, *that godlineſs was profitable to all things, having the promiſe of this life, and of that which is to come?* 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. Did the ſins of Profeſſors hinder you, you ſhould rather have been the more *heedful*, and learned by their falls to beware, and have been the more *careful*, and not the more *careleſs*; It was the *Scripture* and not *their lives*, that was your *Rule*. Did the many opinions of the World hinder you? Why, the Scripture, that was your Rule, did teach you but one way, and that was the right way: If you had followed that, even in ſo much as was plain and eaſie, you ſhould never have miſcarried. Will not ſuch anſwers as theſe confound and ſilence you? If theſe will not, GOD hath thoſe that will: when he asketh the man, *Matt.* 22. 12. *Friend, how cameſt thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?* that is, What doſt thou in my Church among profeſſed Chriſtians, without an holy heart and life? What anſwer did he make? Why the Text ſaith, *He was ſpeechleſs*; he had nothing to ſay. The clearneſs of the

caſe, and the Majeſty of God, will then eaſily ſtop the mouths of the moſt confident of you, though you will not be put down by any thing that we can ſay to you now, but will make good your cauſe, be it never ſo bad. I know already that never a Reaſon that now you can give will do you any good at laſt, when your caſe muſt be opened before the Lord and all the world.

Nay, I ſcarce think that your own Conſciences are well ſatisfied with your Reaſons. For if they are, it ſeems then you have not ſo much as a *Purpoſe to Repent*. But if you do purpoſe to Repent, it ſeems you do not put much confidence in your Reaſons which you bring againſt it.

What ſay you, yet Unconverted ſinners? Have you any good Reaſon to give, why you ſhould not Turn, and preſently Turn with all your hearts? Or will you go to Hell in deſpight of Reaſon it ſelf? Bethink you what you do in time; for it will ſhortly be too late to bethink you. Can you find any fault with God, or his work, or wages? Is he a bad Maſter? Is the Devil whom you ſerve a better? or is the fleſh a better? Is there any harm in an holy life? is a life of worldlineſs and ungodlineſs better? Do you think in your Conſciences that it would do you any harm to be

be Converted and live an holy life? What harm *can* it do you? Is it *harm* to you to have the Spirit of Christ within you? and to have a cleanſed purified heart? If it be bad to be holy, why doth God ſay, *Be ye holy, for I am holy!* 1 *Pet.* 1. 15, 16. *Lev.* 20. 7. Is it *evil* to be like *God?* Is it not ſaid that *God made man in his Image?* Why this *Holineſs* is his *Image*: This *Adam* loſt, and this Chriſt by his Word and Spirit would reſtore to you, as he doth to all that he will ſave. Why were you *Baptized into the Holy Ghoſt*, and why do you Baptize your children into the holy Ghoſt as your *Sanctifier*, if you will not be ſanctified by him, but think it an hurt to you to be ſanctified? Tell me truly as before the Lord; Though you are loth to live an Holy life, had you not rather *die* in the caſe of thoſe that do ſo than of others? If you were to die this day, had you not rather *die* in the caſe of a Converted man, than of the Unconverted? of an holy and heavenly man, than of a carnal earthly man? and would you not ſay as *Balaam*, *Numb.* 23. 10. *Let me die the death of the Righteous, and let my laſt end be like his?*] And why will you not now be of the mind that you will be of then? *Firſt* or *laſt* you muſt come to this, either to be Converted, or wiſh you had been when it is too late.

But what is it that you are afraid of loſing if you Turn? Is it your *Friends*, you will but *change* them: *God* will be your *Friend*, and *Chriſt*, and the *Spirit* will be your *Friend*, and every *Chriſtian* will be your *Friend*, You will get *one Friend* that will ſtand you in more ſtead than all the friends in the world could have done. The friends you *loſe*, would have but ticed you to hell; but could not have delivered you: But the Friend you *get* will ſave you from hell, and bring you to his own eternal reſt.

Is it your *pleaſures* that you are afraid of loſing? You think you ſhall never have a merry day again, if once you be Converted. Alas that you ſhould think it a greater pleaſure to live in fooliſh ſports and merriments and pleaſe your fleſh, than to live in the Believing thoughts of Glory, and in the Love of God, and in Righteouſneſs and Peace, and Joy in the holy Ghoſt, in which the ſtate of Grace conſiſteth! *Rom.* 14. 17. If it be a greater pleaſure to you to think of your Lands and Inheritance (if you were Lords of all the Country) than it is to a child to play for pins: why ſhould it not be a greater Joy to you to think of the Kingdom of Heaven being yours, than of all the riches or pleaſures of the world? As it is but fooliſh

fooliſh Childiſhneſs that makes Children ſo delight in Gawds, that they would not leave them for all your Lands: ſo it is but fooliſh worldlineſs, and fleſhlineſs, and wickedneſs, that makes you ſo much delight in your Houſes, and Lands, and Meat, and Drink, and Eaſe, and Honour, as that you would not part with them for the Heavenly delights. But what will you do for pleaſure when theſe are gone? Do you not *think of that?* When *your pleaſures* end in horror, and go out with a ſtinking ſnuff, the Pleaſures of the Saints are then at the beſt. I have had my ſelf but a little taſte of the heavenly pleaſures in the fore-thoughts of the bleſſed approching day, and in the preſent perſwaſions of the Love of God in Chriſt: but I have taken too deep a draught of earthly pleaſures, (ſo that you may ſee, if I be partial, it is on your ſide:) and yet I muſt profeſs from that little experience, that there is no compariſon: there is more joy to be had in a day (if the Sun of Life ſhine clear upon us) in the ſtate of Holineſs, than in an whole life of ſinful pleaſures, I had *rather be a doorkeeper in the houſe of God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedneſs*, Pſal. 84. 10. *A day in his Courts is better than a thouſand any where elſe*, Pſ. 84. 10. The mirth of the wicked is

like the laughter of a mad man that knows not his own misiry: And therefore *Solomon* saith of such laughter, *It is mad: and of mirth, What doth it?* Eccles. 2. 2. And Eccles. 7. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance, the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth: It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than to hear the song of fools; For as the crakling of thorns under a Pot, so is the laughter of the fool.*] All the pleasure of fleshly things, is but like the scratching of a man that hath the Itch: it is his disease that makes him desire it: and a wise man had rather be without his pleasure, than be troubled with his Itch. Your loudest laughter is but like that of a man that is tickled: he laughs when he hath no cause of Joy. And it is a wiser thing for a man to give all his Estate and his Life to be tickled to make him laugh, than for you to part with the Love of God, and the comforts of Holiness, and the hopes of Heaven, and to cast your selves into damnation, that you may have your flesh tickled with the

the pleasure of sin for a little while. Judge as you are men, whether this be a wise mans part. It is but your carnal unsanctified nature that makes an holy life seem grievous to you, and a course of sensualitie seem more delightful. If you will but Turn, the holy Ghost will give you another *Nature* and *Inclination*; and then it will be more pleasant to you to be rid of your sin, than now it is to *keep* it: and you will then say, that you knew not what a comfortable life was till now, and that it was never well with you, till God and holiness were your delight.

Quest. *BUT how cometh it to pass that men should be so unreasonable in the matters of salvation? they have wit enough in other matters; what makes them so loth to be converted that there should need so many words in so plain a case, and all will not do, but the most will live and die Unconverted?*

Answ. To name them only in a few words, the Causes are these.

1. Men are naturally *in Love* with earth and flesh, they are born sinners, and their nature hath an enmity to God and godliness,

as the Nature of the Serpent hath to a man: And when all that we can say goes againſt an habitual inclination of their Natures, no marvel if it little prevail.

2. They are in *Darkneſs*, and know not the very things which they hear. Like a man that was born blind, and hears an high commendation of the light: but what will *Hearing* do, unleſs he ſees it? They know not what God is, nor what is the power of the Croſs of Chriſt, nor what the Spirit of holineſs is, nor what it is to live in love by faith: They know not the certainty, and ſuitablenes and excellency of the heavenly inheritance. They know not what Converſion, and an holy mind and Converſation is, even when they hear of it. They are in a miſt of ignorance. They are loſt and bewildred in ſin: like a man that hath loſt himſelf in the night, and knows not where he is, nor how to come to himſelf again, till the day light do recover him.

3. They are wilfully confident that they need no *Converſion*, but ſome *partial amendment*; but that they are in the way to Heaven already, and are Converted when they are not. And if you meet a man that is quite out of his way, you may long enough call on him to turn back again, if he will not believe you

you that he is out of the way.

4. They are become ſlaves to their fleſh, and drowned in the world to make proviſion for it. Their luſts and paſſions, and appetites have diſtracted them, and got ſuch an hand over them, that they cannot tell how to deny them, or how to mind any thing elſe. So that the drunkard ſaith, *I love a cup of good drink, and I cannot forbear it.* The glutton ſaith, *I love good chear, and I cannot forbear.* The fornicator ſaith, *I love to have my luſt fulfilled, and I cannot forbear.* And the gameſter *loves* to have his ſports, and he cannot forbear. So that they are become even captivated ſlaves to their fleſh, and their very *wilfulneſs* is become an *impotencie*, and what they *would not* do, they ſay they *cannot*. And the worldling is ſo taken up with earthly things, that he hath neither heart, nor mind, nor time for Heavenly: but as in *Pharaohs* dream, *Gen.* 41.4. the lean kine doth eat up the fat ones; ſo this lean and barren earth doth eat up all the thoughts of Heaven.

5. Some are ſo carried away by the ſtream of evil company, that they are poſſeſſed with hard thoughts of a godly life, by hearing them ſpeak againſt it: or at leaſt they think, they may venture to do as they ſee moſt do:

and so they hold on in their sinful ways; and when *one* is cut off and cast into Hell, and *another* snatcht away from among them to the same condemnation; it doth not much daunt them, because they see not whither they are gone: poor wretches, they hold on in their ungodliness, for all this: for they little know that their companions are now lamenting it in torments, In *Luke* 16. the rich man in hell would fain have had one to warn his five Brethren, lest they should come to that place of Torment. Its like, he knew their minds and lives, and knew that they were hasting thither, and little dreamt that he was there, yea and would little have believed one that should have told them so. I remember a Passage that a Gentleman yet living told me he saw upon a bridge over *Severn*. A Man was driving a flock of fat Lambs, and something meeting them, and hindring their passage, one of the Lambs, leapt upon the wall of the bridge, and his legs slipping from under him, he fell into the stream: the rest seeing him, did one after one leap over the bridge into the stream, and were all, or almost all drowned: Those that were *behind* did little know what was become of them that were gone before; but

Mr. *R. Rowly* of *Shrewsbury* upon *Acham*-bridge.

but thought they might venture to follow their Companions: but as ſoon as ever they were over the wall, and falling headlong the caſe was altered. Even ſo it is with Unconverted Carnal men. *One* dieth by them, and drops into hell, and *another* follows the ſame way: and yet they will go after them, becauſe they think not whither they are gone. Oh but when death hath once opened their eyes, and they ſee what's on the other ſide of the wall, even in another world, then what would they give to be where they were!

6. Moreover, they have a ſubtile malicious enemy, that is unſeen of them, and plaies his game in the dark: and it is his principal buſineſs to hinder their Converſion, and therefore to keep them where they are, by perſwading them not to believe the Scriptures, or not to trouble their minds with theſe matters: or by perſwading them to think ill of a godly life, or to think that its more ado than needs, and that they may be ſaved without Converſion, and without all this ſtir; and that God is ſo merciful, that he will not damn any ſuch as they; or at leaſt that they may ſtay a little longer, and take their pleaſure; and follow the world a little longer yet, and then let it go, and repent hereafter. And by ſuch jugling de-

deluding cheats as these, the Devil keeps the most in his captivity, and leadeth them to his misery.

These, and such like impediments as these, do keep so many thousands Unconverted, when *God* hath *done* so much, and *Christ* hath *suffered* so much, and *Ministers* have *said* so much for their Conversion: when their *Reasons* are silenced, and they are not able to answer the Lord that calls after them, [*Turn ye, Turn ye, why will you die?*] yet all comes to nothing with the greatest part of them: and they leave us no more to do after all, but to sit down and lament their wilful misery.

I Have now shewed you the Reasonableness of Gods Commands, and the unreasonableness of wicked mens disobedience. If nothing will serve turn, but men will yet refuse to Turn, we are next to consider who it is *long* of, if they be damned. And this brings me to the last Doctrine, which is;

Doct. 7. *THat if after all this men will not Turn; it is not long of God that they are condemned, but of themselves, even their*

their own wilfulneſs. They die becauſe they will die, that is, becauſe they will not Turn.

If you will go to hell, what remedy, God here acquits himſelf of your blood; it ſhall not lie on *him* if you be loſt. A negligent Miniſter may draw it upon *him*; and thoſe that encourage you, or hinder you not in ſin, may draw it upon *them*; but be ſure of it, it ſhall not lie upon God. Saith the Lord concerning his unprofitable Vineyard, *Iſa.* 5. 1,2,3,4. [*Judge I pray you, betwixt me and my Vineyard: What could have been done more to my Vineyard, that I have not done in it?* When he had *planted it in a fruitful ſoil, and fenced it, and gathered out the ſtones, and planted it with the choiceſt Vines:* what ſhould he have done more to it? He hath made you men, and endued you with Reaſon; he hath furniſhed you with all external neceſſaries, all creatures are at your ſervice: He hath given you a righteous perfect Law. When ye had broke it, and undone your ſelves, he had pitty on you, and ſent his Son by a miracle of condeſcending mercy to die for you, and be a ſacrifice for your ſins, and he *was in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf.* The Lord Jeſus hath made you a deed of gift of himſelf, and eternal life with him, on the condition you will but accept

accept it and return. He hath on this reaſonable condition offered you the free pardon of all your ſins: he hath written this in his Word, and ſealed it by his Spirit, and ſent it you by his Miniſters: they have made the offer to you an hundred and an hundred times, and called you to accept it, and to turn to God. They have in his name entreated you, and reaſoned the caſe with you, and anſwered all your frivolous objections. He hath long waited on you, and ſtaid your leiſure, and ſuffered you to abuſe him to his face. He hath mercifully ſuſtained you in the midſt of your ſins: he hath compaſſed you about with all ſorts of mercies: He hath alſo intermixt afflictions, to mind you of your folly and call you to your wits: And his Spirit hath been often ſtriving with your hearts, and ſaying there, [*Turn ſinner, Turn to him that calleth thee: Whither art thou going? What art thou doing? Doſt thou know what will be the end? How long wilt thou hate thy friends, and love thine enemies? When wilt thou let go all and Turn, and deliver up thy ſelf to God, and give thy Redeemer the poſſeſſion of thy ſoul? When ſhall it once be?*] Theſe pleadings have been uſed with thee. And when thou haſt delayed, thou haſt been urged to make haſte, and God hath called to thee,

[*To*

[*To day while it is called to day, harden not thy heart: Why not now without any more delay?*]
Life hath been ſet before you; The Joyes of Heaven have been opened to you in the Goſpel, The Certainty of them hath been manifeſted; The certainty of the everlaſting Torments of the damned hath been declared to you. Unleſs you would have had a *ſight* of *Heaven and Hell*, what could you deſire more? Chriſt hath been as it were ſet forth crucified before your eyes, *Gal.*3.1. You have been an hundred times told that you are but loſt men till you come unto him; As oft as you have been told of the evil of ſin, of the vanity of ſin, the world, and all the pleaſures and wealth it can afford; of the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of your lives, and the endleſs duration of the Joy or Torment of the life to come. All this, and more than this have you been told, and told again, even till you were aweary of hearing it, and till you could make the lighter of it, becauſe you had ſo often heard it, like the Smiths dog, that is brought by cuſtom to ſleep under the noiſe of the hammers, and when the ſparks do fly about his ears; and though all this have not converted you, yet you are alive, and might have mercy to this day, if you had but hearts to entertain it. And now let

Reaſon

Reaſon it ſelf be Judge; whether it be long of God or you, if after all this you be unconverted and be damned? If you *die now*, it is becauſe you will die. What ſhould be ſaid more to you? Or what courſe ſhould be taken, that is liker to prevail? Are you able to ſay and make it good, *We would fain have been converted and become new creatures, but we could not; we would fain have forſaken our ſins, but could not; we would have changed our company, and our thoughts, and our diſcourſe, but we could not.* Why, could you not if you would? What hindered you but the wickedneſs of your hearts? Who *forced* you to ſin? or who did hold you back from Duty? Had not you the ſame teaching, and time, and liberty to be godly as your godly Neighbours had? Why then could not you have been godly as well as they? Were the Church-doors ſhut againſt you? or did you not keep away your ſelves? or ſit and ſleep, or hear as if you did not hear? Did God put in any exceptions againſt you in his Word, when he invited ſinners to return; and when he promiſed mercie to thoſe that do return? Did he ſay, [*I will pardon all that repent, except thee?*] Did he ſhut you out from the libertie of his holy Worſhip? Did he forbid you to pray to him any more than others?

You

You know he did not. God did not *drive* you away from him, but you forſook him, and run away your ſelves. And when he called you to him, you *would* not come. If God had *excepted* you out of the general promiſe and offer of mercy, or had ſaid to you: [*Sand off, I will have nothing to do with ſuch as you: Pray not to me, for I will not hear you: If you repent never ſo much, and cry for mercy never ſo much, I will not regard you:*] If God had left you nothing to truſt to but deſperation, then you had a fair excuſe. You might have ſaid, [*To what end ſhould I repent and turn, when it will do no good?*] But this was not your caſe. You might have had Chriſt to be your Lord and Saviour, your Head and Husband as well as others, and you *would not*: becauſe you felt not your ſelves ſick enough for the Phyſitian, and becauſe you could not ſpare your diſeaſe: In your hearts you ſaid as thoſe Rebels, *Luke* 19.14. [*We will not have this man to reign over us.*] Chriſt *would have gathered you under the wings* of his Salvation, *and you would not*, Matth. 23.37. What deſires of your welfare did the Lord expreſs in his holy Word? With what compaſſion did he ſtand over you and ſay, [*O that my people had hearkened unto me, and that they had walked in my wayes!* Pſal. 81.13.

81.13. *O that there were such a heart in this people, that they would fear me, and keep all my Commandments alwayes, that it might be well with them and with their children for ever!* Deut.5.20. [*O that they were wise, that they understood this! and that they would consider their latter end!*] Deut.32.29. He would have been your God, and done all for you that your souls could well desire; but you loved the world and your flesh above him, and therefore you *would not hearken* to him; though you complemented with him, and gave him high Titles, yet when it came to the closing, *you would have none of him*, *Psalm* 81. 11, 12. No marvel then if *He gave you up to your own hearts Lusts, and you walked in your own counsels.* He condescends to reason, and pleads the case with you, and asks you, [*What is there in me or my service that you should be so much against me! What harm have I done thee sinner! Have I deserved this unkind dealing at thy hand? Many mercies have I shewed thee; for which of them dost thou thus despise me? Is it I, or is it Satan that is thy enemy? Is it I, or is it thy carnal self that would undo thee? Is it an holy life, or a life of sin that thou hast cause to fly from? If thou be undone, thou procurest this to thy self, by forsaking me the Lord*

that

that would have ſaved thee, Jer. 2. 17. *Doth not thy own wickedneſs correct thee, and thy ſin reprove thee, that thou mayſt ſee that it is an evil and bitter thing that thou haſt forſaken me?* Jer. 2. 19. *What iniquity have you found in me, that you have followed after vanity and forſaken me? Jer.* 2. 5,6.] He calleth out as it were to the brutes to hear the Controverſie he hath againſt you, Mich. 2. 3,4,5. *Hear O ye mountains the Lords Controverſie, and ye ſtrong foundations of the earth; for the Lord hath a Controverſie with his people, and he will plead with* Iſrael. *O my people, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee? teſtifie againſt me, for I brought thee up out of* Egypt, *and redeemed thee,* &c. *Hear O Heavens, and give ear O Earth, for the Lord hath ſpoken. I have nouriſhed and brought up children, and they have rebelled againſt me. The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his Maſters crib: but* Iſrael *doth not know, my people doth not conſider! Ah ſinful Nation, a people laden with iniquity, a Seed of evil doers!* &c. Iſa. 1. 2,3,4. [*Do you thus requite the Lord, O fooliſh people and unwiſe? Is not he thy Father that bought thee? Hath he not made thee and eſtabliſhed thee?* Deut. 32. 6.] When he ſaw that you forſook him even for nothing, and returned away

from

from your Lord and Life, to hunt after the chaff and feathers of the World, he told you of your folly, and called you to a more profitable employment, *Isa.*55. 1,2,3. [*Wherefore do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight it self in fatness. Encline your ear, and come unto me: hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of* David —— *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found: call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon*, ver.6,7.] And so *Isa.*1. 16,17,18. And when you would not hear, what complaints have you put him to, charging it on you as your wilfulness and stubbornness! *Jer.*2. 12, 13. [*Be astonished O heavens at this, and be horribly afraid.* —— *For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.*] Many a time hath Christ proclamed that free invitation to you, *Rev.*22. 17. [*Let him that is athirst*

athirſt come: and whoever will, let him take the water of life freely.] But you put him to complain after all his offers: [*They will not come to me that they may have life, Joh.* 5.40.] He hath invited you to feaſt with him in the Kingdom of his grace; and you have had excuſes from your grounds, and your cattle, and your worldly buſineſs, and when you *would* not come, you have ſaid you *could not*: and provoked him to reſolve that you ſhould never *taſte of his Supper*, *Luke* 14.15, to 25. And who is it *long* of now but your ſelves? and what can you ſay is the chief cauſe of your damnation, but your own *Wills?* You would be damned. The whole caſe is laid open by Chriſt himſelf, *Prov.* 1. from the 20. to the end. [*Wiſdom cryeth without, ſhe uttereth her voice in the ſtreets, ſhe cryeth in the chief place of Concourſe;* —— *How long ye ſimple ones will ye love ſimplicity, and the ſcorners delight in their ſcorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn ye at my reproof; behold I will pour out my ſpirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Becauſe I have called and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hands, and no man regarded, but ye have ſet at nought all my counſel, and would none of my reproofs: I alſo will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your*

fear

fear cometh as deſolation, and your deſtruction cometh as a whirlwind; when diſtreſs and anguiſh cometh upon you; then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me. For that they hated knowledge, and did not chooſe the fear of the Lord. They would none of my counſels: they deſpiſed all my reproof: Therefore ſhall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the ſimple ſhall ſlay them, and the proſperity of fools ſhall deſtroy them. But whoſo hearkeneth to me ſhall dwell ſafely, and ſhall be quiet from the fear of evil.] I thought beſt to recite the whole Text at large to you, becauſe it doth ſo fully ſhew the cauſe of the deſtruction of the wicked. It is not becauſe God would not teach them; but becauſe *they* would not learn. It is not becauſe God would not Call them, but becauſe they would not Turn at his reproof. Their *wilfulneſs* is their undoing.

Uſe.

FRom what hath been ſaid, you may further learn theſe following things.

1. From hence you may ſee, not only what

what blaſphemie and impietie it is, to lay the blame of mens deſtruction upon God; but alſo how unfit theſe wicked wretches are to bring in ſuch a charge againſt their Maker. They cry out upon God, and ſay, He gives them not grace, and his threatnings are ſevere, and God forbid that all ſhould be damned that be not Converted and Sanctified: and they think it hard meaſure that a ſhort ſin ſhould have an endleſs ſuffering? and if they be damned, they ſay, they cannot help it: When in the mean time, they are buſie about their own deſtruction, even cutting the throat of their own ſouls, and will not be perſwaded to hold their hands. They think *God* were *cruel*, if *he* ſhould damn them; and yet they are ſo *cruel* to *themſelves*, that they *will run* into the fire of Hell; when God hath told them it is a little before them, and neither intreaties, nor threatnings, nor any thing that can be ſaid, will ſtop them. We ſee them almoſt undone: Their careleſs, worldly, fleſhly lives do tell us that they are in the power of the Devil; we know if they die before they are Converted, all the world cannot ſave them; and knowing the uncertainty of their lives, we are afraid every day leſt they drop into the fire. And therefore we intreat them to pitty

their

their own ſouls, and not to undo themſelves when mercie is at hand, and they *will not* hear us. We intreat them to caſt away their ſin, and come to Chriſt without delay, and to have ſome mercie on themſelves; but they will have none. And yet they think that God muſt be cruel, if he condemn them. O wilfull wretched ſinners! It is not *God* that is *cruel* to you; it is *you* that are *cruel* to your ſelves. You are told you muſt *Turn or burn*, and yet you *Turn not*. You are told that if you will needs keep your ſins, you ſhall keep the Curſe of God with them: and yet you *will* keep them. You are told that there is no way to *Happineſs* but by *Holineſs*, and yet you *will* not be Holy. What would you have God ſay more to you? What would you have him *do* with his Mercy? He offereth it you, and you will not have it. You are in the ditch of ſin and miſery, and he would give you his hand to help you out, and you refuſe his help: he would cleanſe you of your ſins, and you had rather keep them. You *love* your luſt, and *love your* gluttony, and ſports, and drunkenneſs, and *will not* let them go. Would you have him bring you to Heaven whether you will or no? Or would you have him bring you and your ſins to Heaven together? Why that's an impoſ-

ſibility;

ſibility; you may as well expect he ſhould turn the Sun into Darkneſs. What, an unſanctified fleſhly heart be in heaven! it cannot be: *There entreth nothing that is unclean*, Rev. 21.27. *For what Communion hath light with darkneſs, or Chriſt with* Belial? 2 Cor. 6.14, 15. *All the day long hath he ſtretched out his hands to a diſobedient and gainſaying people*, Rom. 10.25. What will you *do* now? Will you cry to God for *mercy*! why, God calleth upon *you* to have *mercy* upon your ſelves, and you *will* not. Miniſters ſee the poyſoned Cup in the drunkards hand, and tell him, *There is poyſon in it*, and deſire him to have *Mercy* on his ſoul, and forbear, and he *will not* hear us: drink it he *muſt* and *will*: he loves it, and therefore though Hell comes next, he ſaith, he *cannot help it*. What ſhould one ſay to ſuch men as theſe? We tell the ungodly careleſs worldling, *It is not ſuch a life that will ſerve the turn, or ever bring you to heaven. If a Bear were at your back, you would mend your peace, and when the curſe of God is at your back and Satan and Hell are at your back, will you nor ſtir, but ask, What needs all this ado? Is an immortal ſoul of no more worth? O have mercy upon your ſelves!* But they will have no mercie on themſelves, nor once regard us. We tell them, the end will

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be bitter. Who can dwell with the everlasting fire? And yet they will have no mercy upon themselves. And yet will these shameless wretches say, that God is more merciful than to condemn them, when it is themselves that cruelly and unmercifully *run* upon Condemnation, and if we should go to them with our Hats in our hands, and intreat them, we cannot stop them. If we should fall down on our Knees to them, we cannot stop them; but to Hell they *will*, and yet will not believe that they are going thither. If we beg of them for the sake of God that made them, and preserveth them; for the sake of Christ that died for them; for the sake of their own poor souls, to pitty themselves and go no further in the way to Hell, but come to Christ while his arms are open, and enter into the state of Life while the Door stands open, and now take mercy while mercy may be had; they *will not* be perswaded. If we should *die* for it, we cannot get them so much as now and then to *consider* with themselves of the matter, and to Turn. And yet they can say *I hope God will be merciful.* Did you ever consider what he saith, *Isa.* 27. 11. [*It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them*

and he that formed them will ſhew them no favour.] If *another* man will not cloath you when you are naked, and feed you when you are hungry, you will ſay, he is unmerc ful. If he ſhould caſt you into priſon, or beat and torment you, you would ſay he is unmerciful. And yet you will do a thouſand times more againſt your ſelves, even caſt away both ſoul and body for ever, and never complain of your own unmercifulneſs. Yea and God that waited upon you all the while with his mercy, muſt be taken to be unmerciful, if he puniſh you after all this. Unleſs the holy God of Heaven will give theſe wretches leave to trample upon his Sons blood, and with the Jews, as it were again to ſpit in his face, and do deſpite to the Spirit of Grace, and make a jeſt of ſin, and a mock at holineſs, and ſet more light by ſaving mercy, than by the filth of their fleſhly pleaſures, and unleſs after all this he will ſave them by the mercy which they caſt away, and would none of, God himſelf muſt be called unmerciful by them. But he will be juſtified when he judgeth; and he will not ſtand or fall at the bar of a ſinful worm.

I know there are many particular cavils

but I ſhall not here ſtay to anſwer them par
ticularly, having done it already in m
Treatiſe of Judgement, to which I ſhall refer
them. Had the diſputing part of the worl
been as careful to avoid ſin and deſtruct
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Object. *But we cannot Convert our selves till God convert us: we can do nothing without his grace: It is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy.*

Answ. 1. God hath two degrees of mercy to shew: the mercy of Conversion first;

but I ſhall not here ſtay to anſwer them par ticularly, having done it already in m *Treatiſe of Judgement*, to which I ſhall refe them. Had the diſputing part of the worl been as careful to avoid ſin and deſtruct on, as they have been buſie in ſearchin after the cauſe of them, and forward indi rectly to impute it to God, they might hav exerciſed their wits more profitably, an have leſs wronged God, and ſped bett themſelves. When ſo ugly a Monſter as ſin within us, and ſo heavy a thing as puniſh ment is on us, and ſo dreadful a thing as Hel is before us, one would think it ſhould be a eaſie queſtion, Who is in the fault, and wh ther God or man be the principal or culpa ble cauſe? Some men are ſuch favourable Judges of themſelves, that they are prone to accuſe the Infinite Perfection and Good neſs it ſelf, than their own hearts; and im tate their firſt Parents that ſaid, [*The Serpe tempted me, and the woman that thou gav me, gave unto me, and I did eat,*] ſecret implying that God was the cauſe. So h they, [*The underſtanding that thou gaveſt m was unable to diſcern; the will that thou gav me, was unable to make a better choyce, t objects which thou didſt ſet before me, didſ tice me, the temptation which thou didſt per*

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and the mercy of Salvation laſt: the latter he will give to none but thoſe that *will* and *run*, and hath promiſed it to them only. The former is to make them *willing* that were *unwilling*: and though your own *willing* and endeavours deſerve not this grace; yet your *wilful* refuſal deſerveth that it ſhould be denied to you. Your *diſability* is your very *unwillingneſs* it ſelf, which excuſeth not you ſin, but maketh it the greater. You *could* Turn if you were but truly *willing*: and if your *wills* themſelves are ſo corrupted, that nothing but effectual Grace will move them, you have the more cauſe to ſeek for that Grace, and yeild to it & do what you can in the uſe of means, and not neglect it, or ſet againſt it. Do what you are able firſt, and then complain of God for denying you grace if you have cauſe.

Object. *But you ſeem to intimate all this while that man hath free-will.*

Anſw. The diſpute about free-will is beyond your capacity; I ſhall therefore now trouble you with no more but this about it. Your will is naturally a *free*, that is, a *ſelf-determining faculty*, but it is *vitiouſly inclined*, and *backward to do good*: and therefore we ſee by ſad experience that

it hath not a *vertuous moral freedom.* But that is the *wickedneſs* of it, which deſerveth the puniſhment. And I pray you let us not befool our ſelves with opinions. Let the caſe be your own. If you had an enemy ſo malicious, that he falls upon you, and beats you every time he meets you, and takes away the lives of your children, will you excuſe him, becauſe he ſaith, [*I have not free-will, it is my nature; I cannot chooſe, unleſs God give me grace?*] If you have a ſervant that robbeth you, will you take ſuch an anſwer from him? Might not every Thief and Murderer that is hanged at the Aſſize give ſuch an anſwer, [*I have not free will; I cannot change my own heart: what can I do without Gods Grace?*] and ſhall they therefore be acquit? If not, why then ſhould you think to be acquit for a courſe of ſin againſt the Lord?

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2. FRom hence alſo you may obſerve theſe three things together. 1. What a ſubtile tempter Satan is. 2. What a deceitful thing Sin is. 3. What a fooliſh creature corrupted Man is. *A ſubtile tempter* indeed, that can perſwade the greateſt part of the world to go wilfully into everlaſting fire, when they

have ſo many warnings and diſſwaſives as they have. A *deceitful thing is ſin* indeed, that can bewitch ſo many thouſands to part with everlaſting life, for a thing ſo baſe and utterly unworthy! *A fooliſh Creature* is Man indeed, that will be cheated of his ſalvation for nothing; yea for a *known nothing*; and that by an enemy, and a known enemy. You would think it impoſſible that any man in his wits ſhould be perſwaded for a trifle to caſt himſelf into the fire, or water, or into a coal-pit, to the deſtruction of his life, And yet men will be enticed to caſt themſelves into Hell. If your natural lives were in your own hands, that you ſhould not die till you would kill your ſelves, how long would moſt of you live? And yet when your everlaſting life is ſo far in your own hands under God, that you cannot be undone till you undo your ſelves, how few of you will forbear your own undoing? Ah what a ſilly thing is Man! and what a betwiching and befooling thing is Sin?

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3. FRom hence alſo you may learn, that it is no great wonder if wicked men be hinderers of others in the way to heaven, and would have as many Unconverted as they

they can, and would draw them into ſin, and keep them in it! Can you expect that they ſhould have any mercy on others, that have none upon themſelves? and that they ſhould much ſtick at the deſtruction of others, that ſtick not to deſtroy themſelves? They do no worſe by others, than they do by themſelves.

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4. LAſtly: you may hence learn, that the greateſt enemy to Man is himſelf; and the greateſt judgement in this life that can befall him, is to be left to himſelf; and that the great work that Grace hath to do, is to ſave us from our ſelves; and the greateſt accuſations and complaints of Men ſhould be againſt themſelves; and that the greateſt work that we have to do our ſelves, is to reſiſt our ſelves; and the greateſt enemy that we ſhould daily pray, and watch, and ſtrive againſt, is our own carnal hearts and wills, and the greateſt part of your work, if you would do good to others, and help them to heaven, is to ſave them from themſelves, even from their own blind underſtandings, and corrupted wills, and perverſe affections, and violent paſſions, and unruly ſenſes. I only name all theſe for brevity ſake, and leave them to your further conſideration.

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WEll Sirs, Now we have found out the great Delinquent and Murderer of ſouls, (even mens Selves, their own wills) what remains but that you judge according to the evidence, and confeſs this great iniquity before the Lord, and be humbled for it, and do ſo no more? To theſe three ends diſtinctly, I ſhall add a few words more. 1. Further to convince you. 2. To humble you. And 3. To reform you, if there be yet any hope.

1. We know ſo much of the exceeding *gracious nature of God*, who is willing to do good, and delighteth to ſhew mercy, that we have no reaſon to ſuſpect *him* of being the culpable cauſe of our death, or to call him cruel; He made all good, and he preſerveth and maintaineth all; the eyes of all things do wait upon him, and he giveth them their meat in due ſeaſon; he openeth his hand, and ſatisfieth the deſires of all the living, *Pſal.* 145. 15, 16. He is not only *righteous in all his wayes*, (and therefore will deal juſtly) *and holy in all his works*, (and therefore not the author of ſin) but [*He is alſo good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.*] *Pſalm* 145. 17, 19.

But as for *man*, we know his mind is dark, his

his will perverse, his affections carry him so headlong, that he is fitted by his folly and corruption to such a work as the destroying of himself. If you saw a Lamb lie killed in the way, would you sooner suspect the *sheep*, or the *dog* or *woolf*, to be the author of it; they both stand by? Or if you see an house broken and the people murthered, would you sooner suspect the *Prince* or *Judge*, that is wise and just, and had no need; or a *known Thief or Murtherer?* I say therefore as *Jam.* 1. 13, 14, 15. [*Let no man say when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man,* (to draw him to sin) *but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.* Then *when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*] You see here, that sin is the brat of your own concupiscence, and not to be fathered on God; and that death is the off-spring of your own sin, and the fruit which it will yield you as soon as it is ripe. You have a Treasure of evil in your selves as a Spider hath of poyson, from whence you are bringing forth hurt to your selves, and spinning such webs as entangle your own souls. Your *Nature* shews, its *you* that are the cause.

2. Its evident that you are your own

deſtroyers, in that you are ſo *Ready to entertain any Temptation* almoſt that is offered you. Satan is ſcarce readier to move you to any evil, than you are ready to hear, and to do as he would have you. If he would tempt your underſtanding to error and prejudice, you yeild. If he would hinder you from good reſolutions, it is ſoon done If he would cool any good deſires or affections, it is ſoon done. If he would kindle any luſt or vile affections and deſires in you, it is ſoon done: If he will put you on to evil thoughts, or deeds, you are ſo free that he needs not rod or ſpur; if he would keep you from holy thoughts, and words, and wayes, a little doth it, you need no curb. You examine not his ſuggeſtions, nor reſiſt them with any reſolution, nor caſt them out as he caſts them in, nor quench the ſparks which he endeavoureth to kindle: but you ſet in with him, and meet him half way, and embrace his motions, & tempt him to tempt you. And its eaſie to catch ſuch greedy fiſh that are ranging for a bait, and will take the bare hook.

3. Your deſtruction is evidently long of your ſelves, in that you Reſiſt all that would help to ſave you, and would do you good, or hinder you from undoing your ſelves. God would help and ſave you by his Word, and

you

you reſiſt it, it is too ſtrict for you. He would ſanctifie you by his *Spirit*, and you reſiſt and quench it. If any man reprove you for your ſin, you fly in his face with evil words; and if he would draw you to an holy life, and tell you of your preſent danger, you give him little thanks, but either bid him look to himſelf, he ſhall not anſwer for you; or elſe at beſt, you put him off with an heartleſs thanks, and will not Turn when you are perſwaded. If Miniſters would privately inſtruct and help you, you will not come at them; your unhumbled Souls do feel but little need of their help. If they would Catechize you, you are too old to be Catechized; though you are not too old to be ignorant and unholy. Whatever they can ſay to you for your good, you are ſo ſelf conceited and wiſe in your own eyes, (even in the depth of ignorance) that you will regard nothing that agreeth not with your preſent conceits: but contradict your Teachers, as if you were wiſer than they; you reſiſt all that they can ſay to you, by your ignorance and wilfulneſs, and fooliſh Cavils, and ſhifting evaſions, and unthankful rejections, ſo that no good that is offered can find any welcome acceptance and entertainment with you.

4 Moreover, its apparent that you are ſelf-

ſelf-deſtroyers, in that you *draw the matter of your ſin and deſtruction even from the bleſſed God himſelf.* You like not the contrivances of his Wiſdom: You like not his Juſtice, but take it for cruelty: You like not his Holineſs, but are ready to think he is ſuch a one as your ſelves, *Pſal.*50. 21. and makes as light of ſin as you: You like not his Truth, but would have his Threatnings, even his peremptory Threatnings prove falſe. And his goodneſs which you ſeem moſt highly to approve, you partly reſiſt, as it would lead you to Repentance, and partly abuſe, to the ſtrengthning of your ſin; as if you might the freelyer ſin, becauſe God is Merciful, and becauſe his Grace doth ſo much abound.

5. Yea you *fetch deſtruction from the bleſſed Redeemer, and Death from the Lord of life* himſelf. And nothing more emboldneth you in ſin, than that Chriſt hath died for you; as if now the danger of death were over, and you might boldly venture: As if Chriſt were become a ſervant to Satan and your ſins, and muſt wait upon you while you are abuſing him: and becauſe he is become the Phyſitian of ſouls, and is able to ſave to the utmoſt all that come to God by him; you think he muſt ſuffer you to refuſe his help, and throw away his Medicines, and muſt ſave you whether

ther you will come to God by him or no: ſo that a great part of your ſins are occaſioned by your bold preſumption upon the death of Chriſt.

Not conſidering that he came to Redeem his people from their ſins, and to ſanctifie them a peculiar people to himſelf, and to conform them in Holineſs to the Image of their Heavenly Father, and to their Head, *Mat.*1. 21. *Tit.*2. 14. 1 *Pet.*1. 15, 16. *Col.* 3. 10, 11. *Phil.*3. 9, 10.

6. You alſo *fetch your own deſtruction from all the Providences and works of God.* When you think of his Eternal foreknowledge and Decrees, it is to harden you in your ſin, or poſſeſs your minds in quarrelling thoughts, as if his Decrees might ſpare you the labour of Repentance and an holy life, or elſe were the cauſe of your ſin and death. If he afflict you, you repine; if he proſper you, you the more forget him, and are the backwarder to the thoughts of the life to come. If the wicked proſper, you forget the end that will ſet all reckonings ſtrait; and are ready to think, its as good be wicked as godly. And thus you draw your death from all.

7. And the like you do *from all the Creatures and mercies of God* to you. He giveth them

them to you as the Tokens of his Love, and furniture for his ſervice, and you turn them againſt him, to the pleaſing of your fleſh. You eat and drink to pleaſe your appetite, and not for the Glory of God, and to enable you for his Work. Your Cloathes you abuſe to pride. Your Riches draw your hearts from Heaven, *Phil.*3. 18. Your Honors and applauſe do puff you up: If you have health and ſtrength, it makes you more ſecure, and forget your end. Yea, other mens mercies are abuſed by you to your hurt. If you ſee their Honors and Dignity, you are provoked to envy them. If you ſee their riches, you are ready to covet them. If you look upon beauty, you are ſtirred up to luſt. And its well, if Godlineſs be not an eye-ſore to you.

8. The *very gifts that God beſtoweth* on you, and the *Ordinances* of Grace which he hath inſtituted for his Church, you turn to ſin. If you have better parts than others, you grow proud and ſelf-conceited: If you have but common giſts, you take them for ſpecial Grace. You take the bare hearing of your Duty for ſo good a work, as if it would excuſe you for not obeying it. Your Prayers are turned into ſin, becauſe you *regard iniquity in your hearts*, Pſalm 66. 18. *and depart not from iniquity when you call on the*

Name

Name of the Lord, 2 Tim. 2. 19. Your *prayers are abominable, becauſe you turn away your ear from hearing the Law*, *Prov.* 28. 9. And are more ready to offer the Sacrifice of fools, (thinking you do God ſome ſpecial ſervice) than to hear his Word and obey it, *Eccleſ.* 5. 1. You examine not your ſelves before you receive the Supper of the Lord, but not diſcerning the Lords Body, do eat and drink judgement to your ſelves, 1 *Cor.* 11. 28, 29.

9. Yea the *perſons that you converſe with, and all their actions*, you make the occaſions of your ſin and deſtruction. If they live in the fear of God, you hate them. If they live ungodlily, you imitate them: If the wicked are many, you think you may the more boldly follow them: If the godly be few, you are the more emboldned to deſpiſe them. If they walk exactly, you think they are too preciſe; If one of them fall in a particular temptation, you ſtumble upon them, and turn away from holineſs, becauſe that others are imperfectly holy: as if you were warranted to break your necks; becauſe ſome others have by their heedleſneſs ſprained a ſinew, or put out a bone. If a hypocrite diſcover himſelf, you ſay, *They are all alike*, and think your ſelves as honeſt as the beſt. A Profeſſor can ſcarce ſlip into any miſcarriage,

but

but becauſe he cuts his finger, you think you may boldly cut your throats. If Miniſters deal plainly with you, you ſay they rail. If they ſpeak gently or coldly, you either ſleep under them, or are little more affected than the ſeats you ſit upon. If any errors creep into the Church, ſome greedily entertain them, and others reproach the Chriſtian Doctrine for them, which is moſt againſt them. And if we would draw you from any antient rooted errour, which can but plead two, or three, or ſix, or ſeven hundred years cuſtom, you are as much offended with a motion for reformation, as if you were to loſe your lives by it, and hold faſt *old* errours, while you cry out againſt *new* ones. Scarce a difference can ariſe among the Miniſters of the Goſpel, but you will fetch your own death from it. And you will not hear, or at leaſt not obey the unqueſtionable Doctrine of any of thoſe that jump not with your conceits: *One* will not hear a Miniſter, becauſe he readeth his Sermons, and another will not hear him, becauſe he doth not read them. *One* will not hear him, becauſe he ſaith the Lords Prayer: and another will not hear him, becauſe he doth not uſe it. *One* will not hear them that are *for* Epiſcopacy, and another will not hear them that are *againſt* it.

And

And thus I might ſhew it you in many other caſes, how you turn all that comes near you to your own deſtruction; ſo clear is it that the ungodly are ſelf deſtroyers, and that their perdition is of themſelves.

METhinks, now upon the conſideration of what is ſaid, and the review of your own waies, you ſhould bethink you what you have done, and be aſhamed and deeply humbled to remember it. If you be not, I pray you conſider theſe following Truths.

1. To be your own deſtroyers, is to ſin againſt the deepeſt Principle in your Natures, even the Principle of ſelf-preſervation. Every thing naturally deſireth or enclineth to its own felicity, welfare or perfection. And will you ſet your ſelves to your own deſtruction? when you are commanded to love your Neighbours as your ſelves: it is ſuppoſed that you naturally love your ſelves. But if you love your Neighbours no better than your ſelves, it ſeems you would have all the world be damned.

2. How extreamly do you croſs your own intentions! I know you intend not your own damnation, even when you are procuring it; you think you are but doing

good

good to your ſelves, by gratifying the deſires of your fleſh. But alas, it is but as a draught of cold water in a burning Feaver, or as the ſcratching of an itching wild fire, which encreaſeth the diſeaſe and pain. If indeed you would have pleaſure, or profit, or honour, ſeek them where they are to be found, and do not hunt after them in the way to hell.

3. What pitty is it, that you ſhould do that againſt your ſelves, which none elſe in Earth or Hell can do! If all the world were combined againſt you, or all the Devils in Hell were combined againſt you, they could not deſtroy you without your ſelves, nor make you ſin but by your own conſent. And will you do that againſt your ſelves which no one elſe can do? You have hateful thoughts of the Devil, becauſe he is your enemy, and endeavoureth your deſtruction. And will you be worſe than Devils to your ſelves? Why thus it is with you, if you had hearts to underſtand it; When you run into ſin, and run from godlineſs, and refuſe to Turn at the Call of God, you do more againſt your own ſouls, than men or Devils could do beſides. And if you ſhould ſet your ſelves, and bend your wits to do your ſelves the greateſt miſchief, you could not deviſe to do a greater.

4. You

4. You are falſe to the truſt that God hath repoſed in you. He hath much entruſted you with your own ſalvation: and will you betray your truſt? He hath ſet you with all diligence to keep your hearts; and is this the keeping of them? *Prov.* 4. 23.

5. You do even forbid all others to pitty you, when you will have no pitty on your ſelves: If you cry to God in the day of your calamity, for Mercy, Mercy; What can you expect, but that he ſhould thruſt you away, and ſay, [*Nay, thou wouldeſt not have mercy on thy ſelf: Who brought this upon thee but thy own wilfulneſs?*] And if your Brethren ſee you everlaſtingly in miſery, how ſhall they pitty you that were your own deſtroyers, and would not be diſſwaded?

6. It will everlaſtingly make you your own Tormenters in Hell to think on it, that you brought your ſelves wilfully to that miſery. O what a griping thought it will be for ever to think with your ſelves, [That this was your own doing! That you were warned of this Day, and warned again, but it would not do: That you wilfully ſinned, and wilfully turned away from God: That you had time as well as others, but you abuſed it: You had Teachers as well as others, but you refuſed their inſtruction: You had

had holy Examples, but you did not imitate them: You were offered Chriſt, and Grace, and Glory, as well as others, but you had more mind of your fleſhly pleaſures: You had a price in your hands, but you had not an heart to lay it out, *Prov.*17. 16. Can it chooſe but torment you to think of this your preſent folly? O that your eyes were opened to ſee what you have done in the wilful wronging of your own ſouls! and that you better underſtood thoſe words of God, *Prov.*8. 33,34,35,36. *Hear inſtruction and be wiſe, and refuſe it not: Bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors; For whoſo findeth me, findeth life, and ſhall obtain the favour of the Lord. But he that ſinneth againſt me, wrongeth his own ſoul: All they that hate me love Death.*]

AND now I am come to the Concluſion of this Work, my heart is troubled to think how I ſhall leave you: leſt after this the fleſh ſhould ſtill deceive you, and the world and the Devil ſhould keep you aſleep, and I ſhould leave you as I found you, till you awake in Hell. Though in care of your poor ſouls, I am afraid of this, as knowing the

the obſtinacy of a carnal heart: yet I can ſay with the Prophet *Jeremy* 17.16. [*I have not deſired the woful day, the Lord knoweth.*] I have not with *James* and *John* deſired that *fire might come from Heaven* to conſume them that refuſed Jeſus Chriſt, *Luke* 9. 54. But it is the preventing of the Eternal fire that I have been all this while endeavouring: And O that it had been a needleſs work! That God and Conſcience might have been as willing to ſpare me this labour, as ſome of you could have been. Dear friends! I am ſo loth you ſhould lie in everlaſting fire, and be ſhut out of Heaven, if it be poſſible to prevent it, that I ſhall once more ask you, What do you now reſolve? Will you Turn or die? I look upon you as a Phyſitian on his Patient in a dangerous diſeaſe: that ſaith to him, [*Though you are far gone, take but this Medicine, and forbear but theſe few things that are hurtful to you, and I dare warrant your life; but if you will not do this, you are but a dead man.*] What would you think of ſuch a man, if the Phyſitian and all the friends he hath, cannot perſwade him to take *one* Medicine to ſave his Life, or to forbear one or two poyſonous things that would kill him? This is your caſe. As far as you are gone in ſin, do but now

Turn

Turn and Come to Christ, and take his Remedies, and your souls shall live. Cast up your deadly sins by Repentance, and return not to the poysonous vomit any more, and you shall do well. But yet if it were your bodies that we had to deal with, we might partly know what to do for you. Though you would not consent, you might be held or bound, while the Medicine were poured down your throats, and hurtful things might be kept from you. But about your souls it cannot be so; we cannot Convert you against your wills. There is no carrying mad men to Heaven in Fetters. You may be *Condemned against your wills*, because you *sinned with your wills*: but you cannot be *saved against your wills*. The wisdom of God hath thought meet to lay mans salvation or destruction exceeding much upon the choice of their own wills: that no man shall come to Heaven, that chose not the way to Heaven; and no man shall come to Hell, but shall be forced to say, *I have the thing I chose; my own will did bring me hither*. Now if I could but get you to be willing to be *throughly*, and *resolvedly*, and *Habitually willing*, the work were more than half done. And alas, must we lose our *Friends*, and must they lose their *God*, their *Happiness*, their *Souls* for want of this?

this? O God forbid! It is a ſtrange thing to me, that men are ſo inhumane and ſtupid in the greateſt matters, that in leſſer things are very civil and courteous, and good Neighbours. For ought I know, I have the Love of all, or almoſt all my Neighbours, ſo far, that if I ſhould ſend to ever a man in the Town, or Pariſh, or Country, and requeſt a reaſonable courteſie of them, they would grant it me; and yet when I come to requeſt of them the greateſt matter in the world, for themſelves, and not for me, I can have nothing of many of them, but a patient hearing. I know not whether people think a man in the Pulpit is in good ſadneſs or not, and means as he ſpeaks: For I think I have few Neighbours, but if I were ſitting familiarly with them, and telling them of what I have ſeen or done, or known in the world; they would believe me, and regard what I ſay: But when I tell them from the infallible Word of God, what they themſelves ſhall ſee and know in the World to come, they ſhew by their Lives that they do either not believe it, or not much regard it. If I met ever an one of them on the way, and told them, Yonder is a Coal-pit, or there is a Quick-ſand, or there are Thieves lie in wait for you; I could perſwade them to turn by:

But when I tell them that Satan lieth in wai
for them, and that ſin is poyſon to them, an
that Hell is not a matter to be jeſted with
they go on as if they did not hear me. Tru
ly neighbours, I am in as good earneſt wit
you in the Pulpit, as I am in any familia
Diſcourſe; and if ever you will regard me
I beſeech you let it be here. I think there i
never a man of you all, but if my own *Soul*
lay at your *wills*, you would be willing t
ſave it (though I cannot promiſe that yo
would leave your ſins for it.) Tell me, tho
Drunkard, art thou ſo cruel to *me* that ſpea
to thee, that thou wouldſt not forbear a few
Cups of Drink, if thou kneweſt it woul
ſave my Soul from Hell? Hadſt thou rath
I did burn there for ever, than thou ſhould
live ſoberly as other men do? If ſo, may
not ſay, Thou art an unmerciful monſter
and not a man? If I came hungry or nake
to one of your doors, would you not pa
with more than a cup of Drink to relie
me? I am confident you would: if it wer
to ſave my life, I know you would (ſome o
you) hazard you own. And yet will yo
not be entreated to part with your ſenſua
pleaſures for your own Salvation? Would
thou forbear an hundred Cups of Drink
man, to ſave my life if it were in thy power

and

and wilt thou not do it to ſave thy *own Soul?* I profeſs to you Sirs, I am as hearty a beggar with you this day for the ſaving of your own Souls as I would be for my own ſupply, if I were forced to come a begging to your doors. And therefore if you would hear me then, hear me now. If you would pitty me then, be entreated now to pitty your ſelves. I do again beſeech you, as if it were on my bended knees, that you would hearken to your Redeemer, and *Turn that you may live.* All you that have lived in ignorance, and careleſneſs, and preſumption to this day: all you that have been drowned in the cares of the world, and have no mind of God and Eternal Glory: all you that are enſlaved to your fleſhly deſires, of meats, and drinks, ſports, and luſts: and all you that know not the neceſſity of Holineſs, and never were acquainted with the Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghoſt upon your Souls; that never embraced your bleſſed Redeemer by a lively Faith, and with admiring and thankful Apprehenſions of his Love, and that never felt an higher Eſtimation of GOD and Heaven, and an heartier Love to them, than to your fleſhly proſperity and the things below: I earneſtly beſeech you, not

only for my ſake, but for the Lords ſake and for your Souls ſake, that you go not one day longer in your former Condition, but look about you, and cry to GOD for converting Grace, that you may be made new Creatures, and may eſcape the Plagues that are a little before you. And if ever you will do any thing for me, grant me this requeſt, to Turn from your evil wayes and live. Deny me any think that ever I ſhall ask you for my ſelf, if you will but grant me this. And if you deny me this, I care not for any thing elſe that you would grant me. Nay, as ever you will do any thing at the requeſt of the Lord that made you and redeemed you, deny him not this: For if you deny him this, he cares for nothing that you ſhall grant him. As ever you would have him hear your prayers, and grant your requeſts and do for you at the hour of death and day of judgement, or in any of your extremities, deny not his requeſt now in the day of your proſperity. O Sirs believe it, Death, and Judgement, and Heaven, and Hell are other matters when you come near them, than they ſeem to carnal eyes afar off. Then you would hear ſuch a Meſſage as will bring you with more awakned regarding hearts.

Well,

WEll, though I cannot hope ſo well of all, I will hope that ſome of you are by this time purpoſing to Turn and Live; and that you are ready to ask me, as the Jews did *Peter*, *Acts* 2. 37. when they were pricked in their hearts, and ſaid, [*Men and Brethren what ſhall we do? How might we come to be truly converted? We are willing, if we did but know our Duty. God forbid that we ſhould chooſe deſtruction, by refuſing Converſion, as hitherto we have done.*]

If theſe be the thoughts and purpoſes of your hearts, I ſay of you as God did of a promiſing people, *Deut.* 5. 28, 29. [*They have well ſaid, all that they have ſpoken; O that there were ſuch an heart in them that they would fear me, and keep all my Commandments always!*] Your purpoſes are good: O that there were but an heart in you to perform theſe purpoſes! And in hope hereof, I ſhall gladly give you direction what to do, and that but briefly, that you may the eaſier Remember it for your practice.

DIRECTION I.

IF you would be Converted and ſaved, *labour to underſtand the neceſſity and true Nature of Converſion*: *For* what, and *from* what, and *to* what, and *by* what it is that you muſt Turn.

Conſider in what a lamentable condition you are till the hour of your Converſion, that you may ſee it is not a ſtate to be reſted in. You are under the guilt of all the ſins that ever you committed; and under the wrath of God, and the curſe of his Law, you are bond-ſlaves to the Devil, and daily imployed in his work, againſt the Lord, your ſelves, and others: you are ſpiritually dead and deformed, as being void of the holy life, and nature, and Image of the LORD. You are unfit for any holy work, and do nothing that is truly pleaſing unto God. You are without any promiſe or aſſurance of his protection: and live in continual danger of his Juſtice, not knowing what hour you may be ſnatcht away to Hell, and moſt certain to be damned if you die in that condition. And nothing ſhort of Converſion can prevent it. What ever civilities, or amend-

ments,

ments, or vertues are ſhort of true Converſion, will never procure the ſaving of your ſouls. Keep the true ſenſe of this natural miſery, and ſo of the neceſſity of Converſion on your hearts.

And then you muſt underſtand what it is to be Converted: It is to have a new heart or Diſpoſition, and a New Converſion.

Queſt. 1. *For what muſt you Turn?*

Anſw. For theſe ends following, which you may attain: 1. You ſhall immediately be made living Members of Chriſt, and have intereſt in him, and be renewed after the Image of God, and be adorned with all his graces, and quickned with a new and heavenly life, and ſaved from the tyranny of Satan, and the dominion of ſin, and be juſtified from the curſe of the Law, and have the pardon of all the ſins of your whole lives, and be accepted of God, and made his Sons, and have liberty with boldneſs to call him Father, and go to him by prayer in all your needs, with a promiſe of acceptance; you ſhall have the Holy Ghoſt to dwell in you, to ſanctifie and guide you: You ſhall have part in the brother-hood, communion and prayers of the Saints: You ſhall be fitted for Gods ſervice; and be freed from the Dominion of ſin, and be uſeful and a bleſſing to

the place where you live; and ſhall have the promiſe of this life, and that which is to come. You ſhall want nothing that is truly good for you, and your neceſſary afflictions you will be enabled to bear; you may have ſome taſte of Communion with God in the Spirit; eſpecially, in all holy Ordinances, where God prepareth a Feaſt for your ſouls; ſhall be Heirs of Heaven while you live on Earth, and may foreſee by faith the everlaſting glory, and ſo may live and die in peace; and you will never be ſo low, but your happineſs will be incomparably greater than your miſery.

How precious is every one of theſe bleſſings, which I do but briefly name, and which in this life you may receive!

And then 2. at Death your Souls ſhall go to Chriſt, and at the day of Judgement both Soul and Body ſhall be Juſtified and Glorified, and enter into your Maſters Joy: where your Happineſs will conſiſt in theſe particulars.

1. You ſhall be perfected your ſelves: Your immortal bodies ſhall be made immortal, and the corruptible ſhall put on incorruption; you ſhall no more be hungry, or thirſty, or weary, or ſick: nor ſhall you need to fear either ſhame, or ſorrow, or death,

death, or hell, Your ſouls ſhall be perfectly freed from ſin, and perfectly fitted for the knowledge, and love, and praiſes of the Lord.

2. Your imployment ſhall be to behold your glorified Redeemer, with all your holy fellow-Citizens of Heaven: and to ſee the Glory of the moſt bleſſed God, and to love him perfectly, and be beloved by him, and to praiſe him everlaſtingly.

3. Your Glory will contribute to the Glory of the new Jeruſalem, the City of the Living God, which is more than to have a private felicity to your ſelves.

4. Your Glory will contribute to the Glorifying of your Redeemer, who will Everlaſtingly be magnified and pleaſed in you that are the travail of his Soul: and this is more than the Glorifying of your ſelves.

5. And the Eternal Majeſty, the Living God, will be glorified in your Glory: both as he is magnified by your praiſes, and as he communicateth of his glory and goodneſs to you, and as he is pleaſed in you, and in the accompliſhment of his glorious work, in the glory of the new *Jeruſalem*: and of his Son.

All this the pooreſt begger of you that

is Converted, ſhall certainly and endleſly enjoy.

2. You ſee *For* what you muſt Turn: Next you muſt underſtand *From* what you muſt Turn: And that is (in a word) From your *Carnel ſelf*, which is the end of all the Unconverted. From the fleſh that would be pleaſed before God, and would ſtill be enticing you thereto. From the World, that is the bait; and from the Devil that is the Angler for ſouls, and the deceiver. And ſo from all known and wilful ſins.

3. Next you muſt know *To what* end you muſt Turn; And that is, To God as your End; to Chriſt as the way to the Father: to Holineſs as the way appointed you by Chriſt; and ſo to the uſe of all the helps and means of grace afforded you by the Lord.

4. Laſtly, you muſt know *By what* you muſt Turn. And that is by Chriſt as the only Redeemer, and Interceſſor, and by the Holy Ghoſt as the Sanctifier: And by the word as his Inſtrument or means: And by Faith and Repentance as the means and duties, on your part to be performed. All this is of neceſſity.

DIRECTION II.

IF you will be Converted and Saved, *be much in ſecret ſerious Conſideration.* Inconſiderateneſs undoes the world. Withdraw your ſelves oft into retired ſecrecy, and there bethink you of the end why you were made, of the life you have lived, the time you have loſt, the ſin you have committed; of the love, and ſufferings, and fulneſs of Chriſt; of the danger you are in, of the nearneſs of death and judgement; and of the certainty and excellency of the Joyes of Heaven; and of the certainty and terrour of the torments of Hell; and Eternity of both: and of the neceſſity of Converſion and an holy life. Steep your hearts in ſuch Conſiderations as theſe.

DIRECTION III.

IF you will be Converted and ſaved, *attend upon the Word of God, which is the ordinary means.* Read the Scripture, or hear it read, & other holy writings that do apply it, conſtantly; attend on the publick preaching of the Word. As God will lighten the world by the Sun, and not by himſelf alone

wiht-

without it: So will he Convert and ſave men by his Miniſters, who are the Lights of the world, *Acts* 26.17,18. *Mat.*5.14. When he hath miraculouſly humbled *Paul*, he ſendeth him to *Ananias*, *Acts* 9.10. and when he hath ſent an Angel to *Cornelius*, it is but to bid him ſend for *Peter*, who muſt tell him what he is to believe and do.

DIRECTION IV.

BE*take your ſelf to* GOD *in a courſe of earneſt conſtant Prayer*: Confeſs and lament your former lives, and beg his Grace to illuminate and Convert you. Beſeech him to pardon what is paſt, and to give you his Spirit, and change your hearts and lives, and lead you in his wayes, and ſave you from temptations. And ply this work daily, and be not weary of it.

DIRECTION V.

P*Reſently give over your known and wilful ſins. Make a ſtand and go that way no further.* Be drunk no more: but avoid the place and occaſion of it. Caſt away your luſts

luſts and ſinful pleaſures with deteſtation. Curſe, and ſwear, and rail no more: and if you have wronged any, reſtore as *Zacheus* did. If you will commit again your old ſins, what bleſſing can you expect on the means for Converſion?

DIRECTION VI.

Preſently, if poſſible, change your Company, if it have hitherto been bad. Not by forſaking your neceſſary Relations, but your unneceſſary ſinful companions, and *joyn your ſelves with thoſe that fear the Lord*, and enquire of them the way to Heaven, *Acts* 9. 19, 26. *Pſalm* 15. 4.

DIRECTION VII.

Deliver up your ſelves to the Lord Jeſus as the Phyſitian of your ſouls, that he may pardon you by his blood, and ſanctifie you by his Spirit, by his Word and Miniſters, the inſtruments of the Spirit. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; there is no comming to the Father but by him, *John* 14. 6. Nor is there any other name under Heaven,

Heaven, by which you can be ſaved, *Acts* 4. 12. Study therefore his Perſon and Natures, and what he hath done and ſuffered for you, and what he is to you: and what he will be, and how he is fitted to the full ſupply of all your neceſſities.

DIRECTION VIII.

IF you mean indeed to Turn and Live, *Do it ſpeedily without delay.* If you be not willing to Turn to day, you be not willing to do it at all. Remember you are all this while in your blood: under the guilt of many thouſand ſins, and under Gods wrath, & you ſtand at the very brink of Hell; there is but a ſtep between you and death. And this is not a caſe for a man that is well in his wits to be quiet in. Up therefore preſently, and fly as for your lives: as you would be gone out of your Houſe if it were all on fire over your head. O, if you did but know what continual danger you live in, and what daily unſpeakable loſs you do ſuſtain, and what a ſafer and ſweeter life you might live, you would not ſtand trifling but preſently Turn. Multitudes miſcarry that wilfully delay when they are convinced that it muſt be done.

done. Your lives are ſhort and uncertain; & what a Caſe are you in, if you dye before you throughly turn! You have ſtaid too long already; and wronged God too long, ſin getteth ſtrength and rooting while you delay. Your Converſion will grow more hard and doubtful. You have much to do, and therefore put not all off to the laſt, leſt God forſake you, and give you up to your ſelves, and then you are undone for ever.

DIRECTION IX.

IF you will Turn and Live, do it *unreſervedly*, *abſolutely*, and *univerſally*. Think not to capitulate with Chriſt, and divide your heart betwixt him and the world; and to part with ſome ſins, and keep the reſt: and to let go that which your fleſh can ſpare. This is but ſelf-deluding: you muſt in heart and reſolution forſake all that you have, or elſe you cannot be his Diſciples, *Luke* 14. 26, 33. If you will not take God and Heaven for your portion, and lay all below at the feet of Chriſt, but you muſt needs alſo have your good things here, and have an earthly portion, and God and Glory is not enough for you; it is in vain to dream of Salvation

tion on these terms: For it *will not be*. If you seem never so Religious, if yet it be but a *Carnal* Religiousness; and the fleshes prosperity, or pleasure, or safety be still *excepted* in your devotedness to GOD; This is as certain a way to Death, as open prophaneſs, though it be more plausible.

DIRECTION X.

IF you will Turn and Live, do it *Resolvedly*, and stand not still deliberating, as if it were a doubtful case. Stand not wavering, as if you were yet uncertain, whether GOD, or the flesh be the better Master; or whether Heaven or Hell be the better End; or whether sin or holiness be the better way. But away with your former lusts and presently habitually, fixedly Resolve: Be not one day of one mind, and the next of another; but be at a point with all the world, and Resolvedly give up your selves and all you have to God. Now while you are reading or hearing this, Resolve. Before you sleep another night, Resolve. Before you stir from the place, Resolve. Before Satan have time to take you off, Resolve. You never Turn in-

indeed till you do Reſolve; and that with a firm unchangeable Reſolution.

So much for the Directions.

AND now I have done my part in this work, that you may Turn at the Call of God and Live. What will become of it, I cannot tell. I have caſt the ſeed at Gods command; but it is not in my power to give the increaſe. I can go no further with my Meſſage: I cannot bring it to your hearts, not make it work: I cannot do *your* parts for *you*, to entertain it and conſider of it: Nor I cannot do *Gods* part, by opening your heart to cauſe you to entertain it: Nor can I ſhew you Heaven or Hell to your eye-ſight, nor give you new and tender hearts. If I knew what more to do for your Converſion, I hope I ſhould do it.

But O thou that art the gracious Father of Spirits, thou haſt ſworn thou delighteſt not in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn and Live; deny not thy bleſſing to theſe Perſwaſions and Directions, and ſuffer not thine Enemies to triumph in thy ſight; and the great deceiver of Souls to prevail againſt thy Son, thy

thy Spirit, and thy Word. O pitty poor unconverted ſinners, that have not hearts to pitty or help themſelves: Command the blind to ſee, and the deaf to hear, and the dead to live, and let not ſin and death be able to reſiſt thee. Awaken the ſecure, Reſolve the unreſolved, Confirm the wavering, and let the eyes of ſinners that read theſe lines, be next employed in weeping over their ſins; and bring them to themſelves and to thy Son, before their ſin have brought them to perdition. If thou ſay but the word, theſe poor endeavours ſhall proſper to the winning of many a ſoul, to their everlaſting Joy, and thine everlaſting Glory, Amen.

Finitur, 1656, Decemb. 31.

Three Prayers; One for Families: another for a Penitent Sinner: And another for the Lords Day. For the uſe of thoſe only who need ſuch helps.

Reader,

TWO *Reaſons moved me to annex theſe prayers:* 1. *I obſerve that abundance of people who have ſome good deſires: do forbear through diſability to worſhip God in their families, who I hope would do it, if they had ſome ſuch helps. And though there be many, ſuch extant, yet few of theſe poor families have the Books: And I can give them my own at a little cheaper rate, than I can buy others to give them.*

2. *Some that ſeem to have been brought to true Repentance and newneſs of life, by Gods bleſſing on the reading of my Books, have earneſtly intreated me, to write them a form of prayer for their families, becauſe long diſuſe hath left them unable to pray before others.*

For the ſervice of God, and the good of men,

I am contented to bear the cenſures of thoſe, who account all forms or Book-prayers to be ſins. For in an age when Pride *(the Father) and* Ignorance *(the Mother) have bred* Superſtition *(the Daughter,) and taught men to think that God as fondly valueth their ſeveral Modes of ſpeaking to him, as they do themſelves, and thinketh as contemptuouſly of the contrary as they; the queſtion whether* form *or no* form, Book *or no* Book, *hath been reſolved into ſuch Tragical and direful effects, that I were too tender if a cenſure ſhould diſcourage me.*

If I live to write a Family Directory, perhaps to theſe I may add many More.

A prayer for Morning and Evening in Families.

O GOD, the infinite Eternal Spirit, moſt Perfect in Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs; though mortal eyes cannot behold thee, nor any created underſtanding comprehend thee, thou art preſent with us, and ſeeſt all the ſecrets of our hearts, Our ſins and wants are known to thee! But thou requireſt our confeſſions as the exerciſe of our repentance, and our petitions as the exerciſe

exerciſe of our deſires and filial dependance upon thee! And O that our ſouls were more fit for thy Holy preſence, and for this great and holy work! O thou whoſe mercy inviteth miſerable ſinners to come unto thee, by the new and living way; meet us not in thy juſtice as a conſuming fire, but accept us in thy righteous and beloved Son, in whoſe Mediation is our truſt.

Thou who art the Great Creator of all things, didſt make us in thine Image, to know thee, to love thee, and to ſerve thee: But ſin hath corrupted all our powers, and turned them from thee, and againſt thoſe holy ends and uſes, for which thou didſt create us: In ſin we were conceived, and in ſin we have lived, increaſing our original guilt and miſery. Though we knew that thou art our *Owner*, we have lived as if we were at our own diſpoſal: we have called thee our King and Ruler; but we have rebelled againſt thee, and obeyed our carnal wills and appetites: Thou art Goodneſs and Love it ſelf; and the author of all that is good and amiable, in all the world. And our ſouls ſhould have loved thee, with fervency and delight: But our hearts have been eſtranged from thee, & have ſought delight in worldly vanities, and in the pleaſing of our fleſhly minds and luſts.

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This deceitful world hath had our love, our care, our thoughts, our words, our time, our labour, as if it had been our home and portion, and we had been to continue here for ever, whilst our God and our immortal souls have been neglected. Thou hast made us capable of endless Glory, and called us to seek it, and to set our hearts above on thee: But we have lived as if we believed not thy word, and have despised the joyes of Heaven which thou hast offered us; and preferred the short and sensual pleasures. We have trifled in thy Worship, and served thee hypocritically with our lips alone: we have taken thy dreadful name in vain: we have mispent thy holy day: we have dishonoured our superiors, and neglected our inferiors: our family which should have been ordered in holiness as a Church of God, hath been a house of vanity, worldliness and discontent: Our *thoughts* have been guilty not only of vanity, folly and confusion, but of malice, and of unclean and filthy lusts; Our tongues have been guilty, not only of idle & fooliſh talk; but also of wrathful words and railings, of filthy and immodest speech, and of evil speaking and backbiting others, and of many a lie. We have not Loved our neighbours as our selves; nor done by all others

others as we would have had them done by us: But we have been all for our *carnal ſelves*, Proudly deſiring our own exaltation and eſteem; and Covetouſly deſiring our own commodity; and ſenſually deſiring *pleaſure* to our ſelves; whilſt we have too little cared for the corporal or ſpiritual good of others. We have been very backward to love our enemies, and heartily to forgive a wrong; We have been unprofitable abuſers of thy talents, and have waſted our precious times in vanity, and done but little good in the world.

And though thy wonderful mercy hath given us a Redeemer, and in him a ſufficient remedy for our ſins; and thou haſt poſed the underſtandings of men and Angels, in this ſtrange expreſſion of thy *Wiſdom* and thy *Love*; yet have we ſtaggered at thy word in Unbelief, and ſtupidly neglected this great ſalvation. How careleſly have we heard and read thy Goſpel? How little have we been affected with all the *Love* & *Sufferings* of our Saviour? We could have been thankful to one that had ſaved our lives, or enriched us in the world: But how unthankful have we been to him, who hath done ſo much to ſave our ſouls from endleſs miſery: Alas our hard unhumbled hearts, do make light

light of our ſins and of thy juſt diſpleaſure, and therefore make light of Chriſt & Grace. And it is juſt with thee to deny us for ever, the mercy which we ſet ſo light by.

But deal with us O Lord according to thy Goodneſs, and according to our great neceſſity, and not according to our deſert. We have ſinned as *men*, but be thou merciful as *God*. Where our ſin aboundeth, O let thy grace abound much more! Thou gaveſt mankind a Saviour when we were thine enemies; and thou waſt in Chriſt reconciling the world unto thy ſelf: And it is thy great deſign to glorifie thy wonderful love and mercy, by the advantage of our great unworthineſs and miſery; and to forgive much, that we may love thee much. And if after all this we ſhould doubt of thy willingneſs, to forgive believing penitent ſouls, we ſhould greatly wrong the riches of thy grace. Thou ſoughteſt us, when we ſought not after thee! And it is by thine own command that we ſeek thee, and beg thy mercy: And thou giveſt us the very deſires, which we pour out before thee: Thou beſeecheſt us to be reconciled, and to receive thy grace: And ſhall we queſtion then whether thou art willing to give it? There is enough in the Sacrifice and Merits of thy Son,

Son, to expiate our ſins, and juſtifie penitent believers in thy ſight. Thou haſt made him the infallible Teacher of thy Church: He is a King moſt fit to Rule us, to defend and juſtifie us: Thy Spirit is the ſanctifier of ſouls: And thy Love is ſufficient to be our everlaſting felicity and reſt. We therefore humbly give up our ſelves, to Thee our GOD: To thee our Father, our Saviour, and our Sanctifier; Beſeeching thee to receive us upon the terms of thy Covenant of Grace. Remember not againſt us our youthful folly, ignorance and luſts: Forgive our ſecret and our open ſins: Our ſins of negligence, raſhneſs and preſumption: Eſpecially thoſe ſins, which we have deliberately and wilfully committed, againſt our knowledge, and the ſtrivings of thy grace. Renew and ſanctifie us throughly by thy Spirit: Take from us the old and ſtoney hearts, and give us hearts more tender and contrite, more teachable and tractable: And give us the Divine and heavenly nature; and make us Holy in the Image of thy Holineſs: Cauſe us to reſign and devote our ſelves and all that thou giveſt us, entirely to thee as being thine *own*. Bring all the powers of our ſouls and bodies, into a full ſubjection to thy *Government*. O ſhew us thine infinite

Goodneſs and perfections, and the wonderful mercy which thou haſt given us in Chriſt; and ſhed abroad thy Love upon our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt, that we may be conſtrained by thy Love, to Love Thee above all things, with all our heart, and ſoul, and might. Let the beams of thy Love ſo fire our hearts, that we may Love thee fervently, and delight to love thee, and taſte the beginning of the heavenly felicity and pleaſures in thy Love, and may perceive that we can never Love thee enough; but may ſtill be longing to Love thee more! we dare not ſay [O that we could Love thee as thou art worthy] for that is above both men and Angels: But O that we could Love thee as much as we would Love thee! till we come to that moſt bleſſed ſtate, where we ſhall Love thee more than now we can deſire! If we had never ſinned in word or deed, the want & weakneſs of our Love to thee, is a ſin which we can never ſufficiently lament; and the very ſhame of our corrupted natures; and a burden that we cannot bear! We crave no other felicity in this life, than to know thee better, and Love thee more. Give us the Spirit of adoption, which may poſſeſs us with all childlike affections to thee, as our Reconciled God and Father in Chriſt. Cauſe

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us to make thee our Ultimate End, and to ſeek thy Glory in all that we do. Let it be our chiefeſt ſtudy, in all things to pleaſe thee, to promote thy Kingdom, and to do thy will. Set up thy Glory above the Heavens, and let thy name be ſanctified in all the earth. Convert the Heathen and Infidel world, and let their Kingdoms become the Kingdoms of thy Son. Give wiſe and holy Rulers to the Nations; and let the Goſpel of Jeſus, go forth as the Sun, to the enlightning of all the quarters of the Earth. O that the world, which is ruled by the malicious Prince of darkneſs, might receive and obey thy holy Laws; and in the beauty and harmony of holineſs, be made more like the Saints in Heaven. Reform the Churches which are darkned and defiled, and caſt down that tyranny, ungodlineſs, hereſie and ſchiſm, which keep our Knowledge, Holineſs and Peace. Preſerve and bleſs the Reformed Churches; eſpecially in theſe Kingdoms where we live. Bleſs the King and all in authority: Teach our Teachers; and give both able and faithful Paſtors, all the Congregations of theſe Lands. And give the people obedient, pious and peaceable minds. Cauſe us to ſeek firſt thy Kingdom and righteouſneſs; and let all other

things be added to us. Give us all neceſſaries for the ſuſtaining of our natures; and make us contented with our daily bread; and patient, if for our ſins we want it. Teach us to improve our precious time, and not to ſpend it in idleneſs or ſin: but to diſpatch the work upon which our endleſs life dependeth; and to live as we ſhall wiſh at laſt that we had lived. Let our daily ſins be daily and unfeignedly repented of; and be daily pardoned through Jeſus Chriſt: And let us live in the belief of his mediation, according to our continual neceſſities. Let thy exceeding Love and pardoning mercy teach us to Love our neighbours as our ſelves; and to Love our enemies, and to pardon wrongs, and to do good to all according to our power. Strengthen us in our warfare againſt the fleſh, the world and the Devil; that we may not only reſiſt, but overcome. Keep us from the baits and ſnares of ſin; and let us not thruſt our ſelves into temptations. Save us from Ignorance and unbelief, from ungodlineſs and hypocriſie; from pride and worldlineſs, and ſlothfulneſs, and all ſinful pleaſing of the fleſh. Cauſe us to worſhip thee, in holineſs, and reverently to uſe thy dreadful name; and to remember the keeping holy

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of thy day. Keep us from ſinful diſobeying our Superiours; and all unfaithful neglecting our inferiours; and from injuring any in thought, word or deed: Keep us from ſinful wrath and paſſions: from all unchaſtity in thought, deſire, words or actions. Keep us from ſtealing and defrauding others: from lying, ſlandering and backbiting; and mortifie that ſelfiſhneſs, which would ſet us againſt our neighbours welfare: Keep us from the judgements which we deſerve; and let all afflictions work together for our good. O help us to ſpend this tranſitory life, in a faithful preparation for our death: And let our hearts and converſation be in Heaven: And forſake us not in the time of our extremity; but take our departing ſouls to Chriſt.

Add in the Morning.

Protect, Direct and bleſs us this day, in all our lawful wayes and labours, that in the Evening we may return thee joyful thanks, through Jeſus Chriſt our only Saviour: In whoſe words we ſumm up all our prayers: *Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name: Thy Kingdom come: Thy Will be done; on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread: And forgive us our treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, for ever.* Amen.

Add in the Evening.

Preſerve us this night, and give us ſuch reſt of body & mind, as may fit us for the labours of the following day, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour, In whoſe words we ſumm up our requeſts. *Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

A Confeſſion and Prayer for a Penitent Sinner.

O Moſt Great, moſt Wiſe and Gracious God, though thou hateſt all the workers of inquity, and canſt not be reconciled unto

unto ſin; yet through the mediation of thy bleſſed Son, with pity behold this miſerable ſinner, who caſteth himſelf down at the foot-ſtool of thy grace: Had I lived to thoſe high and holy ends, for which I was created and redeemed, I might now have come to thee in the boldneſs and confidence of a Child, in aſſurance of thy Love and favour: But I have played the fool and the rebel againſt thee. I have wilfully forgotten the God that made me, and the Saviour that Redeemed me, and the Endleſs Glory which thou didſt ſet before me: I forgot the buſineſs which I was ſent for into the world; and have lived as if I had been made for nothing, but to paſs a few dayes in fleſhly pleaſure, and pamper a carkaſs for the worms: I wilfully forgot, what it is to be a man, who hath Reaſon given him to rule his fleſh, and to know his God, and to foreſee his death, and the ſtate of immortality: And I made my Reaſon a ſervant to my ſenſes, and lived too like the beaſts that periſh. O the precious time which I have loſt, which all the world cannot call back! O the calls of grace which I have neglected! and the teachings of God, which I have reſiſted! The wonderful Love which I unthankfully rejected;

and the manifold mercies which I have abuſed, and turned into wantonneſs and ſin! How deep is the guilt which I have contracted! And how great are the Comforts which I have loſt! I might have lived all this while, in the Love of thee my gracious God: and in the delights of thy holy word and wayes: in the daily ſweet foreſight of Heaven, and in the joy of the Holy Ghoſt; If I would have been ruled by thy righteous Laws: But I have hearkned to the fleſh, and to this wicked and deceitful world; and have preferred a ſhort and ſinful life, before thy Love and endleſs Glory.

Alas, what have I been doing ſince I came into the world? Folly and ſin have taken up my time. I am aſhamed to look back upon the years which I have ſpent: and to think of the temptations which I have yielded to: Alas, what trifles have enticed me from my God? How little have I had for the holy pleaſures which I have loſt? Like *Eſau* I have prophanely ſold my birthright for one morſel: To pleaſe my fancy my appetite and my luſt, I have ſet light by all the joyes of Heaven; I have unkindly deſpiſed the goodneſs of my Maker! I have ſlighted the love and grace of my Redeemer! I have reſiſted thy holy Spirit, ſilenced my own con-

conſcience , and grieved thy Miniſters and my moſt faithful friends ! and have brought my ſelf into this woful caſe , wherein I am a ſhame and burden to my ſelf;& God is my terror,who ſhould be my only hope and joy.

Thou knoweſt my ſecret ſins, which are unknown to men ! Thou knoweſt all their aggravations ! My ſins O Lord have found me out ! My fears and ſorrows overwhelm me ! If I look behind me , I ſee my wickedneſs purſue my ſoul , and as an army ready to overtake me and devour me! If I look before me, I ſee thy juſt and dreadful judgement, and I know that thou wilt not acquit the guilty : If I look within me, I ſee a dark defiled heart ! If I look without me , I ſee a world ſtill offering freſh temptations to deceive me : If I look above me, I ſee thine offended dreadful Majeſty : and if I look beneath me , I ſee the place of endleſs torment , and the company with which I deſerve to ſuffer. I am afraid to live, and more afraid to dye.

But yet when I look to thine abundant Mercy , and to thy Son , and to thy Covenant , I have hope. Thy Goodneſs is equal to thy Greatneſs : Thou art Love it ſelf : and thy mercy is over all thy works : So wonderfully hath thy Son condeſcended

unto ſinners, and done and ſuffered ſo much for their ſalvation, that if yet I ſhould queſtion thy willingneſs to forgive, I ſhould but add to all my ſins, by diſhonouring that matchleſs mercy which thou doſt deſign to glorifie. Yea more, I find upon record in thy word, that through Chriſt thou haſt made a Covenant of Grace, an Act of Oblivion, in which thou haſt already conditionally but freely pardoned all: granting them the forgiveneſs of all their ſins, without any exception, when ever by unfeigned faith and repentance, they turn to thee by Jeſus Chriſt. And thy preſent mercy doth increaſe my hope, in that thou haſt not cut me off, nor utterly left me to the hardneſs of my heart, but ſheweſt me my ſin and danger before I am paſt remedy.

O therefore behold this proſtrate ſinner, which with the Publican ſmiteth on his breaſt, and is aſhamed to look up towards Heaven; O God be merciful to me a ſinner. I confeſs not only my original ſin, but the follies and fury of my youth, my manifold ſins of ignorance and knowledge, of negligence and wilfulneſs, of omiſſion and commiſſion: againſt the Law of Nature, and againſt the Grace and Goſpel of thy Son! Forgive and ſave me O my God! for thy abundant

bundant mercy, and for the ſacrifice and merit of thy Son, and for the promiſe of forgiveneſs which thou haſt made through him: for in theſe alone is all my truſt. Condemn me not, who condemn my ſelf. O thou that haſt opened ſo precious a fountain for ſin and for uncleanneſs, waſh me throughly from my wickedneſs, and cleanſe me from my ſin. Though thy juſtice might ſend me preſently to Hell, let mercy triumph in my ſalvation. Thou haſt no pleaſure in the death of ſinners, but rather that they repent and live! If my repentance be not ſuch as thou requireſt, O ſoften this hardned flinty heart, and give me repentance unto life. Turn me to thy ſelf, O God of my ſalvation, and cauſe thy face to ſhine upon me! Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right Spirit within me! Meet not this poor returning prodigal in thy wrath, but with the embracement of thy tender mercies! Caſt me not away from thy preſence, and ſentence me not to depart from thee with the workers of iniquity. Thou who didſt patiently endure me when I deſpiſed thee, refuſe me not now I ſeek unto thee, and here in the duſt implore thy mercy! Thou didſt convert and pardon a wicked *Manaſſeh*, and a perſecuting *Saul!* And there are

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multitudes in Heaven who were once thine enemies! Glorifie alſo thy ſuperabounding grace in the forgiveneſs of my abounding ſins.

I ask not for liberty to ſin again, but for deliverance from this ſinning nature. O give me the renewing Spirit of thy Son, which may ſanctifie all the powers of my ſoul! Let me have the new and heavenly birth and nature; and the Spirit of adoption to reform me to thine Image, that I may be holy as thou art holy. Illuminate me with the ſaving knowledge of thy ſelf and thy Son Jeſus Chriſt. O fill me with thy Love, that my heart may be wholly ſet upon thee; and the remembrance of thee be my chief delight. Let the freeſt and ſweeteſt of my thoughts run after thee! And the freeſt and ſweeteſt of my diſcourſe be of thee; and of thy Glory and thy Kingdom, and of thy word and wayes. O let my treaſure be laid up in Heaven, and there let me daily and delightfully converſe. Make it the great and daily buſineſs of my devoted ſoul, to pleaſe thee, and to honour thee, to promote thy Kingdom, and to do thy will: Put thy fear into my heart that I may never depart from thee! This world hath had too much of my heart already: Let

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it now be crucified to me, and I to it, by the Croſs of Chriſt. Let me not love it, nor the things which are therein: but having food and rayment, cauſe me therewith to be content. Deſtroy in me all fleſhly luſts; that I may not walk after the fleſh, but the Spirit. Keep me from the ſnares of wicked company, and from the counſel and wayes of the ungodly. Bleſs me with the helpful communion of the Saints; and with all the means which thou haſt appointed to further our ſanctification and ſalvation, O that my wayes were ſo directed that I might keep thy Statutes. Let me never return again to folly, nor forget the Covenant of my God! Help me to quench the firſt motions of ſin, and to abhorr all ſinful deſires and thoughts; and let thy Spirit ſtrengthen me againſt all temptation, that I may conquer and endure to the end. Prepare me for ſufferings, and for death and judgement, that when I muſt leave this ſinful world, I may yield up my departing ſoul with joy, into the faithful hands of my dear Redeemer! that I be not numbered with the ungodly who die in their unpardoned ſin, and paſs into everlaſting miſery; But may be found in Chriſt, having the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith; and may attain

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to the reſurrection of the juſt: That ſo the remembrance of the ſin and miſeries from which thou haſt delivered me, may further my perpetual thanks and praiſe, to thee my Creator, my Redeemer and my Sanctifier.

And O that thou wouldſt call and convert the miſerable Nations of Idolaters and Infidels; and the multitudes of ungodly hypocrites, who have the name of Chriſtians, and not the truth and power and life! O ſend forth labourers into thy harveſt, and let not Satan hinder them. Proſper thy Goſpel and the Kingdom of thy Son, that ſinners may more abundantly be converted to thee, and this Earth may be made liker unto Heaven: That when thou haſt gathered us all into Unity in Chriſt, we may all with perfect Love and Joy aſcribe to thee the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Praiſe and Prayer for the Lords Day.

GLorious Jehovah, Thou art infinitely above the Praiſe of Angels; much more of ſuch ſinful worms as we: Far be it from our hearts to think, that thou needeſt any thing

thing that we can do, or that all our praiſe can add unto thy bleſſedneſs! But thy love and mercy hath advanced us to this honour, and made our own felicity our duty: For all that are far from thee ſhall periſh; but it is good for us to draw near to thee! And leſt the vanities and buſineſs of this world ſhould hinder us, thou haſt appointed us this thy ſpecial day, that our compoſed minds might be taken up, with thy Love and praiſe, and might attend the Lord without diſtraction, and might fore-taſte our Everlaſting Reſt. O be thou now to thy ſervants ſouls, the Spirit of Life, the Spirit of Light, and Love and Power! That the Heavenly Life may quicken us to this holy and heavenly work, that by faith we may ſee thee in thy own communicated Light; and that our Love may riſe with fervour and delight, through the ſweet communication of thy Love: And that all within us which doth reſiſt, may be overpowred by thy ſtrength, which is manifeſted in our weakneſs; That ſo the ſacrifice of our perſons and our praiſe, which we humbly offer at thy command, may be ſuch as are fit for thine acceptance, through Jeſus Chriſt.

Thou and thou alone art GOD; the immortal, and invisible Spirit; Eternal

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and infinite in Being and Perfections! Before the forming of the world, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God. Thy understanding is infinite: Thou perfectly knowest thy self and all things; but art comprehended by none! Thy will is Good, yea, Goodness it self, and perfect Love: Loving thy self and all thy works! Thou art the Almighty, and nothing is too hard for thee. Thou art the Creator of all the world; Thou broughtest all things out of nothing! Thou spakest the word, and they were made! Thou gavest their being to the glorious Angels, and all the intellectual Spirits; All the Heavens were made by thee! Thou saidst, Let there be Light, and there was light: Thou madest the Sun, and all the Stars: Thou gavest them their wonderful powers: and their offices, that by their Light and Heat and Motion, they might be for life and Action, and for times and seasons here below; How glorious art thou O Lord in these thy wondrous works! the greatness, the glory and the virtues whereof, are so far beyond our dark apprehensions. The higher Spirits who better know them, and possess the high and glorious mansions, do better praise thee the great Creator, whose word did form that noble

noble frame when the morning Stars did ſing together, and all the Sons of God did ſhout for joy. Thou madeſt the Earth, the Land and Sea, and all the creatures that dwell therein: All Fowl and Fiſhes; Beaſts and Plants, in wonderful variety, beauty and virtue haſt thou made them all: The Air and clouds, the thunder and lightning, the rain and ſnow, the winds and earthquakes: the marvelous motions of the Sea, are all thy great unſearchable works, The ſmalleſt worm or flower doth far ſurpaſs our knowledge! How then ſhould mortals comprehend, the greatneſs, and harmonious order of the world? How thou haſt founded the earth upon nothing? And what is in the depths thereof? How thou moveſt and maintaineſt and preſerveſt the order of the univerſal frame! And cauſeſt the ſweet and powerful influences, of the fiery and celeſtial parts, upon the things below? How thou ſhutteſt up the Sea with ſandy doors; and makeſt the clouds to be its garments, and the darkneſs as its ſwadlingband: and ſaiſt, Hitherto, and no further ſhalt thou come! How great O Lord, and manifold are thy works: In perfect Wiſdom, Goodneſs and power thou haſt made them all.

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But it is Man whom thou haſt made, the nobleſt inhabitant of this lower world: Thou Breatheſt into his body the breath of life, and he became a living ſoul! Thou madeſt him little lower than the Angels, that thou mighteſt crown him with glory and honour: Thou gaveſt him dominion over the works of thy hands; and haſt put all things below as under his feet. Thou madeſt him in thine image, with an Underſtanding Mind, and an unforced will, and executive power, to *Know* and *Love* and *Serve* thee, his moſt Wiſe, and Good and Great Creator. Thou placedſt him in this lower world; that he might paſs through it to the bleſſed preſence of thy Glory: Thou becameſt a *Father* to him, being his Owner, his Ruler and his Chiefeſt Good; even his great Benefactor, and his ultimate end: That he might live in abſolute Reſignation, Subjection and Love to thee. Thou gaveſt him in Nature and in thy precept, a Law which was holy, juſt and good, that by following thy conduct, he might pleaſe thee and attain to full felicity, Thou didſt furniſh him with all things neceſſary to his obedience, and oblige him by the abundance of thy bleſſings. But he quickly fell from his innocency and honour,

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by turning from his God: He believed the falſe and envious Tempter, even when he accuſed thee of falſhood and of envy: As if all thy wondrous works and mercies, had not proved thee to be True and Good. Thus did man fooliſhly requite the Lord, and forſook the rock of his ſalvation: And by one man ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin. But mercy rejoyced againſt judgement, and thou didſt not let out all thy wrath: but with the ſentence of death, thou didſt joyn the Promiſe of a Redeemer. O that men would praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and for his wonderful works for the children of men!

As thou gaveſt the mercies of the Promiſe to the Fathers; ſo in the fulneſs of time thou didſt ſend thy Son; He came and took our nature to his Godhead: Being conceived by the Holy Ghoſt; made of a Woman, under the Law: Born of a Virgin: He made himſelf of no reputation; but took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men. O wonderfull condeſcending Love! Angels proclaimed it; and Angels admire it, and ſearch into it; and in the Churches Glaſs they ſtill behold the manifold wiſdom of God: how low then ſhould Redeemed ſinners fall, in the humble admi-

admirations of this Grace! How high ſhould they riſe in the thankful praiſe of their Redeemer.

He came on earth and converſt with men, to make known to men the inviſible God, and the unſeen things of the world above: He came as the Light and Saviour of the world; to bring to light immortality and life. He was holy, harmleſs and undefiled; ſeparate from ſinners, and fulfilling all righteouſneſs; that he might be a meet High Prieſt and effectual Saviour of ſinners. He taught us by his perfect doctrine and example, to be humble, obedient, and to contemn this world: to deny our ſelves, and bear the Croſs, that we may attain the everlaſting crown of glory. He humbled himſelf to the falſe accuſations and reproach of ſinners, and to the ſhameful and bitter death of the Croſs, to make himſelf a Sacrifice and propitiation for our ſins, and a ranſome for our guilty ſouls, that we might be healed by his ſtripes. O matchleſs Love, which even for enemies, did thus lay down his precious Life! He hath conquered and ſanctified, death and the grave to all believers. He therefore took part of fleſh and blood, that he might by death deſtroy the Devil that had the power of death; and

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deliver them who through the fear of death, were all their life time ſubject unto bondage. He hath procured for mankind a Covenant of Grace, and ſealed it as his teſtament with his blood. And now there is forgiveneſs with thee, that thou maiſt be chearfully feared and obeyed in hope. It was thine own Love to the world, O Father, which gave thine only begotten Son, that whoſoever truly believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. Thou waſt in Chriſt reconciling the world unto thy ſelf, and not imputing their ſins unto them. Thou haſt committed the word of reconciliation to thy Miniſters, to beſeech ſinners even in thy name, and in the ſtead of Chriſt, to be reconciled to thee. Thou commandeſt them to offer thy mercy unto all, and by importunity to compel them to come in that thy houſe may be filled, and thy bleſſed feaſt may be furniſhed with gueſts. Thou refuſeſt none that come to thee by Chriſt: Thou denyeſt thy mercy to none but the obſtinate & final rejecters of it. Thou giveſt eternal life to them who were the Sons of death; and this life is in thy Son: For he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt, all that come to thee by him. To as many as receive him thou

giveſt

giveſt power, to become the Sons of God. Thou giveſt them alſo the Spirit of thy Son, even the Spirit of adoption, to renew them to thy holy image, that they may be like their Heavenly Father; to ſanctifie them to thy ſelf, and by ſhedding abroad thy love upon their hearts, to draw up their hearts in love to thee. Thou makeſt them a peculiar people to thy ſelf, and zealous of good works, for which thou doſt regenerate them. Thou giveſt them all repentance unto life; and crucifieſt the fleſh and all its luſts: Thou teacheſt them to live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly, and ſaveſt them from this preſent evil world; and mortifieſt their ſinful love thereof; that thou maiſt have their love, and be their felicity. O with what Love haſt thou loved poor rebellious ſinners, that they ſhould be converted and made the Sons of God? yea, heirs of Heaven, and coheirs with Chriſt; that when we have ſuffered with him, we may be glorified with him!

Thou doſt build thy Church upon the Rock, the bleſſed Mediator; that the power of Hell may not prevail againſt it. Thou haſt made him its Teacher, Prieſt and King: Of him we learn to know thee and thy will. By him we have our peace, our acceptance and acceſs to thee. He is the Lord of the dead

dead and the living: Thou haſt delivered all things into his hands, and made him Head over all things to the Church. When he aſcended up on high, he appointed his Miniſters, to gather, and order, and edifie this univerſal Church, which is his body: He gave his Apoſtles the infallible Spirit, to lead them into all truth, and the Spirit of *power* to be his witneſs by Miracles to the world! They have taught us all things whatſoever he commanded them, and committed that Doctrine in the Sacred Scriptures, to thoſe Paſtors and Teachers, whom thou haſt appointed to preſerve and Preach it, and to feed thy flock to the end of the world. And though ſin, alas, hath wofully defiled, and Schiſm divided, theſe thy Churches; yet art thou among them, and beareſt with their infirmities, and giveſt them thine Oracles; and calleſt them to holineſs, love and peace, and knoweſt thy wheat among the chaff.

O that men would praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and for his wondrous works for the children of men! How glorious art thou O Lord in holineſs! to be reverenced in the aſſemblies of the Saints, and honoured of all that are about thee? Holineſs becometh thy houſe for ever: In thy Temple ſhall every

every man ſpeak of thy glory. We bleſs thy name O our great Creator! We bleſs thy name our gracious Redeemer! We bleſs thy name moſt Holy Spirit. O that our ſouls could with greater thankfulneſs magnifie the Lord, and our Spirits rejoyce in God our Saviour! Who haſt pittied us in our loſt eſtate, for thy mercy endureth for ever. We thank thee for our being! We thank thee that thou haſt redeemed us from ſin and Hell! We thank thee that thou haſt brought us by Baptiſm into thy Covenant and Church! We thank thee for theſe high and ſacred priviledges; that we are not forraigners or ſtrangers among the Heathen and Infidel world, but fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the houſhold of God: That we may ſtand in the preſence of thy holineſs, and praiſe thee in the aſſemblies of believers, and are not baniſhed from theſe ſacred ſocieties and works! A day in thy Courts is better than a thouſand! We had rather be door-keepers in the houſe of God, than to dwell in the Pallaces of wickedneſs. Bleſſed are they that know the joyful ſound, and fruitfully live under the dews of Heaven; They ſhall walk O Lord in the light of thy countenance; In thy name ſhall they rejoyce all the day, and

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in thy righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted? For thou art their glory and their ſtrength and in thy favour they ſhall be ſafe and glad and great.

But eſpecially thoſe whom thou haſt brought into the inviſible Church of the regenerate, can never ſufficiently magnifie thy grace. When we lived as without thee in the world, and never ſincerely loved or deſired thee, but followed our fleſhly luſts, and the deceitful vanities of the world; When God was not in all our thoughts, and we had no pleaſure in thy holy wayes; When we deſpiſed grace, and reſiſted thy Spirit, and went on adding ſin to ſin: Then didſt thou pity us in our blood! Thou ſenteſt us thy word: Thou madeſt it powerfull on our hardned hearts; Thou broughteſt us to conſider of our ſtate and wayes; and gaveſt us ſome relenting and contrition. It is comfortable to us to review, the ſtrivings and victories of thy grace, the meltings of thy mercy, and the comforts of thy Love! When we feared leſt our ſins would have been our damnation, and that thou wouldſt never receive ſuch wretched rebells; how freely didſt thou pardon all? How graciouſly didſt thou em-

brace us? delighting to ſhew mercy, and overcoming our hearts with the greatneſs of thy love? O how many ſins didſt thou forgive? What work had thy Spirit to do, upon theſe ignorant, proud and ſelfiſh minds? Upon theſe carnal, worldly and diſobedient hearts? How many mercies, preſervations, comforts, haſt thou ſince that time vouchſafed us? How many deſires haſt thou firſt given us, and then accepted from us? How many afflictions haſt thou ſhortned or ſanctified. How many joyful or profitable hours have we had with thee alone in ſecret? and with thee and thy people in the Communion of Saints? Many O Lord are thy wondrous works, and thy thoughts of mercy to thy ſervants: If we would reckon them in order and declare them, they are more than can be numbered. And after all theſe as Prieſts to God, we are here to offer thee the Sacrifice of praiſe; rejoycing in thee our portion and ſalvation.

And when this ſhort and troubleſome life is ended, we have thy promiſe that we ſhall reſt with thee for ever. If in this life only we had hope, we ſhould be of all men moſt miſerable. But thou wilt conduct us through this Wilderneſs, and guide us by thy

thy counſel, and bring us in ſeaſon to thy glory. For thou haſt not given us theſe faculties to ſeek thee, and know thee and Love thee and delight in thee in vain: Thou wilt ſurely perfect nature and grace, and cauſe them to attain their end. The great undertaking, work and ſufferings of our Redeemer ſhall not be in vain. Thy ſealed promiſe ſhall not be broken. Thy Spirit hath not in vain renewed us, and ſealed us to that bleſſed day: Nor ſhall thy pledge, and earneſt, and witneſs within us, prove deceits. Theſe deſires and groans ſhall not be loſt; And theſe weak beginnings of Light and Love, do foreſhew our full fruition and perfection. This ſeed of grace portendeth glory: And the foretaſts of Love, do tell us that we ſhall be happy in thy Love for ever. Our hope in thy goodneſs, thy Son, and thy Covenant, will never leave us fruſtrate and aſhamed.

We therefore bleſs thy name O Lord, as thoſe that are redeemed from Death and Hell? as thoſe who are advanced to the dignity of thy Son! as thoſe whom thou ſaveſt from all their enemies; but eſpecially from *our ſelves*, and from our ſins: We bleſs thy name, as thoſe who are entring

into glory! and hope to be with Chriſt for ever! where ſin and ſorrow, enemies and fears, ſhall be ſhut out, and ſhall moleſt our ſouls no more for ever!

We foreſee by faith that happy day! We ſee by faith the *New Jeruſalem!* the innumerable Angels! the perfected ſpirits of the juſt! their glorious Light! their flaming Love! their perfect harmony! We hear by faith their joyful Songs of thanks and praiſe. Lately they were as low and ſad as we: in ſins and ſorrows, in manifold weakneſs, ſufferings and fears! But by faith and patience they have overcome! And in faith and patience we deſire to follow our Lord and them! The time is near: This fleſh will quickly turn to duſt, and our delivered ſouls ſhall come to thee! Our life is ſhort! and our ſins and ſorrows will be ſhort! Then ſhall we ſee with open face! and in thy light we ſhall have light! We ſhall no more groan, and cry out in darkneſs, O that we could know the Lord! Then ſhall we love thee with pure, unmixed perfect love! and need no more to groan and cry, O that our ſouls were enflamed with thy love! Then ſhall we praiſe thee with thankful alacrity and joy, which will exceed our preſent apprehenſions and deſires!

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O bleſſed ſtreams of Light and Love, which will flow from thy opened glorious face, upon our ſouls for ever! How far will that Everlaſting Sabbath, and thoſe perfect praiſes, excell theſe poor and dull endeavours! As that triumphant City of God excelleth, this imperfect childiſh, diſcompoſed Church.

Quicken Lord our longings for that bleſſed ſtate and day! O come Lord Jeſus! Come quickly! and fulfill thy word; that we may be with thee, where thou art, and may behold thy glory! Stay not till faith ſhall fail on earth. Stay not till the powers of darkneſs conquer all the remnant of thine inheritance, and make this world yet liker unto Hell; nor till the godly ceaſe, and the faithful fail from among the children of men! O when ſhall the world acknowledge their great Creator and Redeemer; and abhorr their Idols, and ceaſe from their unbelief! When ſhall the reſt of the Heathens and Infidels be thy ſons inheritance, and the Kingdoms of the world become his Kingdom! O when ſhall Heaven be made the pattern of this earth! and men delight to do thy will! When ſhall the proud, the worldly and the ſenſual, renounce

their deceits, and walk humbly and holily with their God? And the fool whose heart denyeth the Lord, and calleth not upon thee, but eateth up thy people as bread, return unto thee, and fear thy name, and fight no more against his Maker! Hasten O Lord the salvation of thy people, and keep them in uprightness and patience to the end. Have mercy upon all the ignorant and unreformed Churches in the world! Deliver them from the Eastern and Western tyrannie, which keepeth out the means of knowledge and reformation! And restore them to the primitive purity, simplicity and unity, that their light may shine forth, to the winning of the Heathen and Infidel world, whom now their pollutions drive from Christ! Preserve and repair the Churches which are reformed; and revive among them knowledge, holiness and peace. Bless these Kingdoms with the light and power of the Gospel, and with peace. O bless the King and all in authority, with the wisdom, holiness and prosperity, which are needful to their own, and to the common good! And keep the Subjects in their duty to thee and their superiors: that we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godli-

neſs and honeſty. Let all the Congregations be bleſſed with burning ſhining lights: And let the buyers and ſellers be caſt out of thy Temple. And let not the malice of Satan, or the Sacriledge of men, be able to hinder the Goſpel of thy Kingdom, nor alienate thy devoted faithful labourers, from thy harveſt work.

Give us the neceſſaries of this preſent life, and a contented mind with what thou giveſt us! And kill in us our worldly love, and fleſhly luſts.

Teach us to live daily by faith on our Redeemer. And by him let us have continual acceſs to thee; and the daily pardon of our daily ſins: and a heart to love and pardon others.

O ſave us from all the ſuggeſtions of Satan, and from the ſnares of this world, and the allurements of ſinners; and from all the corrupt inclinations of the fleſh. And give us not up to ſin, nor to our own concupiſcence: nor to the malice of Satan, or of ungodly men: nor to any deſtructive puniſhment which our ſin deſerves!

O teach us to know the work of life, and the preciouſneſs of our ſhort and haſty time! and to uſe it as will moſt comfort us at our

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laſt review: Teach us ſo to number our dayes, as that we may apply our hearts to wiſdom! And not like fools, to waſte in vain, thoſe precious hours, on which Eternity dependeth, and which all the world cannot call back. Let us do thy work with all our might; eſpecially in our particular Callings and relations: Let us make our Calling and Election ſure, and ſpend our dayes in the delightful exerciſe of faith, hope and love: Keep us ſtill watchful and in a continual readineſs for death and judgement, and longing for the coming of our Lord. Let our hearts and converſations be in Heaven, from whence we look for our glorious Redeemer; In whoſe words we ſumm up all our prayers——*Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done; on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us. And lead us not into temptation: but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory; for ever.* Amen.

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